

# University News

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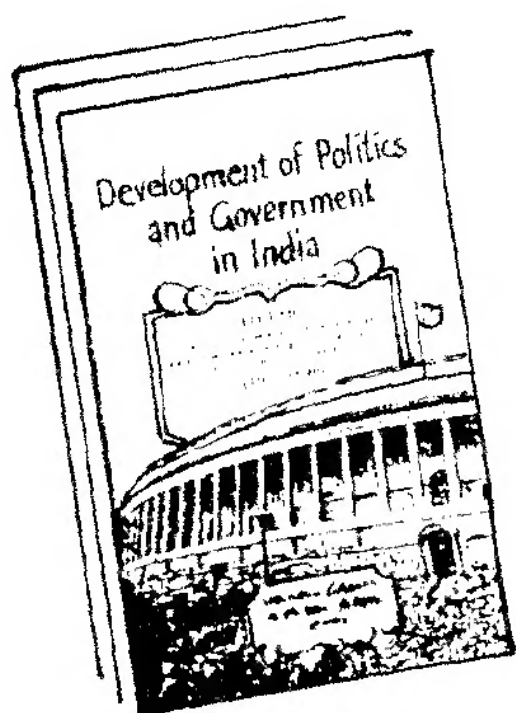
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Editor :  
**SUTINDER SINGH**



# Society Without Books ?

"A room without books is as a body without soul", said Cicero. So is true of any society. Books have indeed such a profound influence on our total make up that we can hardly visualise a society without books. In this Special Issue of *University News* an effort has been made to examine how and in what manner books really touch our lives. The theme has been explored under a number of sub-themes like Reading and Thinking, Globalisation of Knowledge, Library and Learning, Books in the Information Age, University Publishing, Books for Higher Education, and Books for Research.

In the opening piece, S. Muthukumaran *et al*, while exploring how reading and listening have affected thinking from the primitive society onwards and changed the course of our history conclude that 'books and society are locked in an inter-dependent and inter-penetrative relationship. When read, books, the analytic receptors of thought become endless generators of thought and the modern society is one which cannot exist without thought, that is, without books'. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah traces the emergence of the 'Right to Reading' and shows how this right leads to the necessity of ensuring the 'Freedom of Expression'. If to Gitika Dutta Dhupkar 'reading is the signature of civilisation and books are a bridge to a better world', to Maharaj Singh reading provides 'a very healthy and much needed academic diet'. Introspecting as to how books have endured in his life, C.R. Mitra concludes 'books are the most inexpensive way of living up to the demands of a knowledge society and to become an effective member of the same'. His faith that 'books shall endure is not derived from a mere faith, it is a part of a practical philosophy of life'. While M.S. Ramamurthy concerns himself with the free flow of knowledge across the frontiers and our ability to put that knowledge to effective use, Abul Hasan focusses on the book development policies in Asia and reassures us that books are not yet 'an endangered species'. Sewa Singh in his article on 'Library and Learning' points to the inevitable transformation of the role of library from service provision based on collection of materials to an access point for providing information. A.R. Sethi examines the catalytic role of the library/information professionals in this social transformation. Writing on the 'Books in the Information Age', T. Vishwanathan reports on the potentialities of CD-ROM and a discernible trend towards electronic publishing. Amrik Singh cogently argues 'why we are without a couple of good university presses?' While Anand Sarup decries preponderance of guide books and textbooks structured to pass examinations and the lack of books that challenge the intellect, A.P. Srivastava commends for consideration an acquisition programme on the lines of the Library of Congress Acquisition Programme or the Canadian Acquisition Programme to ensure adequate provision of books for higher education. Discussing the sub-theme 'Books for Research' Pawan Sikka deplores the lack of breakthrough research and original publications, while J.N. Kapur pleads for incentives for authors and publishers to promote research and scientific publications.

Another theme chosen for this issue was 'My Favourite Reading'. Readers were invited to discuss any outstanding book or books they may have enjoyed reading during the last three years and share the thrill they experienced with the readers. They could also write on a particular author whose works had interested and inspired them. The response has been very encouraging and we have quite a good crop from all over the country. However, three papers in this section do not strictly adhere to this theme. Meenakshi Mukherjee's 'Indian English Literature in the Global Context' has been included for it is a commentary on the entire gamut of Indian Writing in English. Fr. Pereira's 'The Pleasure of Reading' finds a place for it sums up all that our contributors to this section are trying to describe. Man Mohan Lal's 'Evaluation of Literature Through Indian Epistemology' is there for it provides an original tool that should serve as a touchstone for the evaluation of literature from the standpoint of Indian sensibilities.

This special issue is dedicated to the 11th New Delhi World Book Fair being held on 5-13 February 1994. Billed as the largest of all the preceding book fairs, it expects to attract over 900 publishers from all over the globe. Israel, Turkey and Austria will be participating in the New Delhi World Book Fair for the first time. The Fair will have Africa as its central theme with focus on Africa and publishing trends. Two seminars 'Africa and India : Publishing for a New Age' and 'Black Writing Across the Continents' have been planned to sharpen the focus. Academic journals will have a pride of place matched only by children books from over 30 countries. We wish our readers good buys and the Fair a grand success.

*Everywhere  
I have sought rest  
and not found it  
Except  
sitting in a corner  
by myself  
with a little book*

*— Thomas A Kempis*

# SOCIETY AND BOOKS

## Reading and Thinking

S. Muthukumaran \*

A. Joseph \*\*

M. Balasubramanian \*\*\*

Society is a cohesive structure of individuals who come together sharing certain values that range from the cultural to the commercial. The hooping together of individuals in a social group rests on the interaction of people knit with a common purpose and on the participation of people in social and socializing events. A major instrument/medium of social participation is language. The verbal mode of social interaction, based on the principle of shared human existence, has bound societies into nationhood and nations into transnational brotherhood. Even in those times in communal existence when the written form of communication had not been invented, the tradition of oral communication united people into tribes. The myths of the races, from the African to the Teutonic and from the Irish to the Indian, had helped forge and maintain the social identity of tribes and races. The folk literacy traditions that are prevalent still across countries and continents can be viewed as survivors of the preliterate linguistic communication of social beings. Among others, those oral texts had the vital function of knitting people into a common social identity, which might be viewed as a forerunner to the modern national consciousness of any society. In the primitive societies, the unwritten texts were the agents of social integration of individuals.

### Writing, Reading and Thinking — A Cyclical Process

The advent of writing had a great impact not only on the standardization of language, smoothing out or minimising regional variations, but on the social organization of human beings. Though at the initial stages of writing, knowledge was accessible only to a few, the curiosity of men regarding the advantages of literacy soon turned books into magical entities of power. Efforts were taken to translate the knowledge and wisdom enshrined in the books

of other societies into one's own language in an attempt to build a more cultured society. Thus, books became generators of changes in society. They also became the testing ground of ideological conflicts and revolutions. Created in a social framework, books became the creators of social phenomena.

It may be quite revealing to consider the significance of the words used to refer to Books, Reading and Thinking in an ancient but living language Tamil : *Nool* is the word for book. It means straightening out, i.e., it straightens out the thinking and clears all the doubts of the reader. *Padi* is the word for reading. It means a step or a step in the process of acquiring knowledge or a step towards attaining the target or aim. *En* is the word for thinking. The word also means numerals or abstraction of ideas. Thus it may be seen that these words themselves point out how books influence thinking, how reading is a step towards acquiring knowledge, how thinking leads to assimilation of knowledge and conceptualization of thought, and how reading and thinking lead to generation of new books. Thus, a book that communicates ideas/thoughts would, when read, generate an unending chain of thoughts which, in turn, could be formulated into books. Centres of reading and thinking, books thus become a central social phenomenon in a(ny) society's life.

### Generation of New Way of Thinking and Reading

Books have played a quite significant role in shaping new societies and in reshaping old ones into new. For example the contributions made by King Alfred between 871 to 899 in creating a society/nation rich in literature and culture have been recorded in history. The whole system of political economy and economic administration prevalent in the form of unwritten thought was put into writing in *Sangam Literature* in Tamil and in *Kautilya's Arthashastra* in Sanskrit. The need for the existence of a society with all its fields of activities integrated had been felt even in past societies. When the texts of the Scriptures and prayers used in the church

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were in Latin, the natives of the land, ignorant of the classical tongue of Scriptural mystery, could not participate in the spiritual proceedings. Reading and listening to prayers in a context in which all the factors stood in a culturally homogenous relationship alone could facilitate a sense of non-alienated fulfilment. The ninth century Moravian Mission led by Constantine-Cyril and Methodius aimed at integrating the spiritual component with the rest of the Slavic culture by rendering the Scripture in the Slavic language. The Mission, as Roman Jakobson has remarked (*"Semiotics"*, *Dialogues* 1980, 156), had far-reaching national and socio-political consequences in its effort to integrate: "... *the ritual signs of the ceremony, the verbal signs of the mother tongue, and the iconographic signs in the historical struggle for a language to be used in the divine service, and therefore for the entire country, which would be understandable to everyone, and thus for equality for every person and every people ...*". The major consequence of the Moravian Mission was the keen awakening of the linguistic and national consciousness of the Slavic society.

#### Emergence of Socio-Political Identity through Reading

In India itself, the instance of the written text being used to build up national consciousness can be seen during the Independence Movement. Subramania Bharathiar's essays in Tamil on nationalism and patriotism succeeded in generating emotion-charged thoughts on the need for the emergence of a free Indian nation. Reading of such texts and the public singing of the patriotic poems triggered off fervent reflections on the political struggle. As a matter of fact, the role of published texts in mobilizing a concerted nationalist movement throughout India was massively significant. The role of words on print and of words in public performances like plays, recitations and speeches in gathering the public into a nationalist movement could be seen unmistakably in the Irish Movement also. Recreation of the Irish myth and the pervasive manipulation of the Irish peasant idiom and speech-rhythm in books led to a resurgent awareness of Irishness in the minds of the people of Ireland. The efforts of America in the past and Canada at present to forge a post-colonial national identity and to export their culture and cultural history through books prove how a society can be and is shaped by words. The arguments so far made reveal that the use of books in moulding and defining a society/nation is a global phenomenon.

#### Reading, Thinking and Power Structure

Books that are brought into existence in and for the society go beyond just shaping societies. They play a significant instrumental role in changing the very structure of the society in which they have been created. The Moravian Mission mentioned earlier was partly a society-changing phenomenon because it aimed at radically altering the ecclesiastical convention. The objective of cultural integration implicit in the movement also underlined the freedom of the society from ecclesiastical imperialism of Latin. However, it was with the Reformation in Europe that reading and thinking became a movement that was far-reaching in its consequences socially and religiously. The claim of Luther, Tyndale and Wycliffe that the words of God should be made to reach the common people in their own everyday language was, of course, based on the spirit of democratization of religion. But the claim went beyond this in a sociological sense in that it challenged the whole class of clergy and of the privileged few who had a monopolistic hold on reading and interpretation of the Gospel. The clergy and the aristocrats feared that the availability of the Scriptures to the common people would empower them to question the power of the social superiors in the class-structure. It was feared that the hierarchy would crumble and the existing social order would collapse. The leaders of the movement, quite aware of the momentous social implications, went on with their mission at the risk of getting themselves burnt at the stake. The success of Reformation only emphasised how writing, which is the off-spring of society, can change both the surface and the deep structures of the society. In the Tamil society also, the course of a similar movement could be found. The imaginative religious contributions of the *Bhakti Movement* in Tamil swept into the northern regions of India and generated a revival of spiritual fervour. The Tamil movement could also be seen as a major step towards the use of Tamil as the language of worship in temples. Though the apparent aim was to usher in hope of redemption to the common man, the ultimate effect was to reveal to the people the power of literacy. The emphasis on intelligent comprehension and on the reflective competence of the mind, which are the results of reading and thinking, tilted the balance of power from the self-selected few to the historically less privileged classes. In political parlance, power would pass on from oligarchy to democracy. That is to say, a great revolution in social order and power structure was inevitable.

## Reading and Radical Thinking

In the ancient world, great masters of thought had spoken against any form of revolution that would undermine the existing value systems. Plato (*Republic*) was for a stable and unalterable system of values; Aristotle (*Politics*) held the view that any radical alteration in basic values would result in revolution; and, Cicero (*De Republica*), who equates revolution with sedition, remarks that those in power should be "always armed to meet emergencies which unsettle the constitution". The books of these three great masters could not stop revolutions from taking place in the socio-political scene. But, in St. Thomas Aquinas and Milton there is the recognition that corruption and inequality, which violate the sense and operation of justice and equality, breed revolutions.

It is with the books and pamphlets of Milton that the modern and revolutionary attitude to education and society surfaces in the strongest of terms. Milton (*On Education*) put forth the idea that true education should mould pupils into "enlightened cultivated, responsible citizens and leaders". He placed emphasis on the need for teaching the sciences, though he also held that the sense of subordination to the Bible should also be taught. Milton's concept of education, anticipating John Dewey in many ways, envisaged preparing learners for playing a better and more fruitful role in society. But, far more revolutionary, at its time, was Milton's socio-political attitude as enunciated in "The Tenures of Kings and Magistrates". It claimed that men were free-born and hence had the liberty and right to reject any ruler even if he were not a tyrant and to choose a ruler "as seems best to them". Milton's concept that actual power resides with the people was far ahead of his times. Though the reading of such writings and critical thinking over them were not widespread during Milton's own time, the ideas got circulated through the society. The rise of the parliamentarians to power, coeval with Milton's writings, and the consequent socio-political changes confirmed beyond doubt the society-changing power of books.

The instance of books changing the course of a society, a nation and the political scene comes out stronger in the case of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. His views expressed in *Observations* aver that inequality in society leads to unfair accumulation of wealth and that wealth leads to luxury and idleness: "The primary source of evil is inequality; inequality has made

possible the accumulation of wealth. The words rich and poor are only relative terms; wherever men are equal, there will be neither rich nor poor. Wealth inevitably leads to luxury and idleness; luxury permits a cultivation of the arts, and idleness that of the sciences". The most striking argument here is that the development and function of the arts and the sciences are related to social inequality and injustice. Rigidly institutionalized education with a specific class-orientation would help the few wealthy in power to wield more and more power. The poor majority have to sweat themselves out in serving the power of the rich. To break the stranglehold of such a grave perpetuation of inequality, there should be socio-economic justice which would see to it that each has something and that none has anything in excess, and the social structure and vision should be such that the majority are not kept suppressed in slavery by the few possessing wealth and therefore power. Human relationships should be based not on the tyrannical imposition of the convenience of the few over the majority, but on social contract according to which one obeys "the self-prescribed law" that ensures liberty. Even education becomes a "free and accepted contract between teacher and pupils". The idea that a sense of total commitment to collectivity should replace the practice of the powerful wealthy flaying the economically and socially disadvantaged found an immediate echo in the hearts of the French society. Thus, the French Revolution could be construed as a social phenomenon that materialized through the power of books, especially the books of Rousseau.

A similar relationship between the world of ideas and books and society was witnessed, but on a different scale, in India. Surendranath Banerjee through the issues of *The Bengalee* and Ranade through *Indu Prakash* generated the Swadeshi Movement and the Hindu reformist movement all over India. No less was the impact of the social/religious reformist ideas of Swami Dayananda Saraswathi on the population of India, especially the Indian intelligentsia. Swamiji's movement for the removal of the "medieval excrescences" of Hinduism and for creating a caste-free and idol-worship-free Hindu society influenced even creative writers like Tagore (*Gora*) and went a long way in giving a modern face to convention and orthodoxy. That words and books had the revolutionary force to change the existing mode of social thinking was proved by the social reformist movement launched by E.V. Ramasamy Naikar in the Southern parts of



India. Thiru. Vi.Ka's reflections on the status of women and his recommendations for the upliftment of women were equally powerful in not only creating successive generations of revolutionary thought, but in changing the social milieu and conceptions of the day.

### Reading, Thought and Ideology

On the socio-political scene too appeared powerful books that radically revolutionised people's attitude to society and social structure. The writings of Karl Marx introduced the idea that revolution is a decisive function in the historical process and that it is a regular phenomenon that a newly ascendant class should overthrow the outworn class in power. The mode of production and the question of relations between production and the class divisions are crucial factors in creating a situation of revolutionary potential. The idea of progressive alienation of the working class from its own product and the interpretation of history as successive attempts at exploitation in different forms reverberated through the length and breadth of the erstwhile USSR. Further explicatory writings on Marx by Lenin and the systematic exposition and teaching of Marxism corroded the old traditional values. The success of the Marxist values radically changed the entire face of social life in the USSR. China, too, reveals how the ideological battle through books could shatter the ancient social and socio-politico-economic systems and change the whole course of a society.

Books could become an ideological instrument in the hands of the anti-Marxist, capitalist society as well. The Marxist regime could be viewed, as it has been, as another form of exploitation of labour and it has been argued that the Marxist society has succeeded only in creating the *apparent*, a new bureaucratic managerial class. E.M. Forster and Livingstone, though they speak in favour of a highly regimented rulership of a less mature society till it grew strong in maturity to choose a right government for itself, are fervent spokesmen of democracy. The old Aristotelian concept of the struggle between oligarchy and democracy has now become a conflict between capitalist and anti-capitalist camps. The huge sums of money spent on printing books for propagation of their respective social and political ideals by the USA and the erstwhile USSR in the past is a clear evidence to the fact that books are the training ground for effecting and spreading socio-political changes. The book has remained and still remains

such a great force in the society that a society without books cannot be imagined.

### Reading and Scientific Thought

Even as books are inseparably related to the structure of social values, they are closely linked with the development of modern scientific and technological society.

Books are the records of all scientific discoveries. As compendium of all the results and findings of scientific research, books have become the major means of circulation of scientific truths and achievements. The explosive growth of scientific and technological knowledge cannot be adequately dealt with without books that carry investigative findings to all corners of the world. Sharing of scientific knowledge and the common pooling of scientific resources would be impossible without books.

Books are the place for justifying the need for scientific growth. Bronowski and a host of other scientists have argued, through writing, in favour of scientific advancement and against the popular misconception that science has brought man to the brink of extinction. Such writings place the blame on man, the user of science rather than on science which is an instrument of growth and social prosperity.

Books are used as the medium for explicating and publicising the fruitful applications of science to everyday life. Hardin Jones has written extensively on the ruinous effects of drug abuse and how drugs could be utilized for bettering life.

Books also promote the use of the scientific mode of investigation of the problems of everyday life, both individual and social. Spreading of the scientific temper and the use of the empirical method in ordinary life has been the life-mission of some of the writers. Thomas Henry Huxley and J.B.S. Haldane are classic examples.

Like the books that deal with human and social values, the science and scientific books also aim at shaping and changing the existing society into a better one.

### Reading and National Identity

Meant for circulation of ideas, books bind readers into a community. The subject matter dealt with,

the way the message is conveyed and the communicative strategies employed appeal to specific sets of readers and as many reading communities would be there as there are text-types. Each such reading community becomes a miniature society. Beyond such miniature societies of readers is the larger group that shares in and is bound by the same culture. Books that are the product and the perpetuators of a society's culture emphasise the basic unity of a society, though the society may have diverse faces on the surface. The sub-cultural, linguistic and other differences are forged into a broad cultural unity by books. The epics of ancient India stand as a monumental evidence to the power of books to build a larger cohesive community of nation. And the time may not be far off when books, the medium that relates men, mind and society will have it in their power to unite the nations of the world into a world community.

### Conclusion

Books have come to stay as a major tool for man to focus his inquisitive spirit on the phenomena of the society. They are the instrument of observation for man and the place for man to record what has been observed. In the social sciences, humani-

ties and in natural sciences, books have become centres of empirical analysis. They are the means used to explore the relationship between man and the world. Books are again instruments for analysing man's relationship to nature from the scientific and the metaphysical perspectives. They are the living forces that define man, the mode of existence of man, and the relationship of man to man and man with the things of the world. They are not simply the "*precious life-blood of a master's spirit*" as Milton has observed but they are the life blood of the whole society of man. They are such a vital part of the society that a reader gets of a book what he/she has inherited from the society and the history of the society. As held by the structuralists the mind has predetermined structures and it elicits such structures from the book it reads. A book gives what it has taken from the society and the society receives more than what it has given to the structuring of a book. This amounts to admitting that books and society are locked in an interdependent and interpenetrative relationship. When read, books, the analytic receptors of thoughts become endless generators of thought and the modern society is one which cannot exist without thought, that is, without books.

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# Reading and Thinking in Relation to Books

Malcolm S. Adiseshiah\*

## The Correlation

Reading and thinking are two closely correlated activities. Reading stimulates thinking, enriches it and gives rise to further new thinking. Similarly thinking when concretised into writing is a source of all reading. This does not mean that one cannot exist without the other. There is a case of routine reading, which is what is called learning by rote, when what is read is not absorbed by one's mind, but results in the capacity to reproduce blindly what has been read. Similarly, all thinking is not based on reading nor leads to reading. Thinking in certain metaphysical areas like worship, prayer and meditation can arise from the subject being thought about and not from reading. While therefore the two areas are independent and can go their separate ways, their relationship in the form of a correlation of reading and thinking is one of the important and decisive areas of our life.

## The Voracious Reader

We have had in this country and in several other countries persons who are born with a special gift of reading fast and reading all that they can put their hands on. I belong, to some extent, to this category, because I have trained myself to be able to read a printed page of a book as I do a sentence. There is some kind of mental photographic mechanism which photographs the page in one's mind and so enables a very fast and quick reading. This capacity of fast and voracious reading is not to be found generally in all persons, but reading itself is a human right and it is to that that some attention is given.

## The Right to Reading

The right to reading was proclaimed by UNESCO in 1972 in the International Book Year when a programme of Book Development and Action was set forth to ensure the realisation of this right to reading for all people at all times and in all places in the shortest possible time, as a further back up to the anti illiteracy campaign. It was at that time to ensure the application of this right to reading to all people that a Charter of the Book was

framed and launched for adoption by all countries and for all people. This did not mean that we could or would realise over night the right of all people everywhere to reading and to books. We will in this reading and book area continue to have the same gap between the ideal and the actual as we have in other areas such as the right to freedom for all, the right to vote for all, the right to health for all, the right to education for all. Like all other rights, this declaration of the right to reading through books was the setting forth of a claim which could no longer be questioned or argued about. It would require a long and painful process for its realisation. We are used to this in other areas. The existence of vast areas of injustice does not modify the right to justice. Similarly the existence of the vast ocean of illiteracy, which characterises particularly this country which has the largest number of illiterates in the world at over 300 million, men, women and children who cannot read, does not take away the urgency, imperative and importance of the right to read; rather it is the main beacon light for our drive to give everyone the tools of reading including writing and arithmetic. In regard to this challenge we seem to have made a sound start with the Total Literacy Campaign which has made over 120 million adult illiterates literate with a capacity to read. We have a long way to go, quantitatively to give the remaining 200 million the facility of reading and stimulated thinking. Qualitatively, the vistas are ever receding, for reading opens up the WORD — and its boundless riches, while thinking charts for us the WORLD — and its endless ecstasies and agonies.

## The Right to Read and the Oral Tradition

At one point there was a question whether to become knowledgeable about anything, about for instance the time of sowing the seed, or the amount of fertiliser to be used, or the timing of tillering and flowering, there is required the prior capacity for reading. We have in this country a strong oral tradition which not only dominates our families and our rural areas which have no or limited access to schools or books, but also parts of our culture in Carnatic music and dance, for example, which by oral transmission through history on to today is dominant over the written word. This oral tradition is to be found in the most advanced countries and

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among the most highly educated persons. In Unesco for example after the most careful and detailed report on every problem that was to be dealt with had been prepared and made available in the then four official languages of its General Assembly, I, as the secretariat head, was invariably asked by the representatives of the European and North American countries to introduce orally the document or the report, because these highly educated people and government representatives were either too busy for or traditionally averse to reading the publications placed before them, and so listened with rapt attention to my oral presentation. The question can be asked then whether, instead of going through all the rigors of learning reading, the appropriate information could not be acquired orally and acted upon immediately. This juxtaposition of literacy and oracy however was rejected because in a society already divided by caste, colour and creed, this would be yet another source of division with a small number being able to read and therefore having direct access to knowledge and the majority unable to read and so depending on this minority for their knowledge. The right to reading means that everybody must have this independent access to knowledge and learning in order to ensure that the resulting thinking is creatively possible for everyone.

### The Thinkers

As all literacy and reading aim at promoting and enriching thinking, the right to reading is accompanied by the right to thinking. It is this right which has given rise to the importance of ensuring Freedom of Thought. One of the marks of the controlled and totalitarian society is that this freedom of thought is restricted or negated directly by various laws and governmental edicts, and indirectly by being channeled along certain lines through books written and controlled by the state authority. Thus the freedom of thought requires also the freedom of reading and publishing. Within this category of thinking, originating from and being stimulated by reading, there are also the creative personalities who are the thinkers in any given point of time. Thus the founders of the great religions — Confucius, Christ, Mohammad, Buddha, Mahavira, Zoroaster are examples of persons who gave thinking an original place in life and society. It is their thinking that has led to the great religious movements, just as it is the thinking of Karl Marx, Engels and Lenin, which has opened up the stream of social justice, or Gandhiji, Abraham Lincoln, Burke and Gladstone whose thoughts pioneered the way

for individual and social self development and democracy. In these cases it is not reading which inspired thinking but rather it was thinking that led to the whole stream of books and publications associated with the religions, with communism and the fight for social justice, democracy and the thirst for freedom. Books have been and are the focus of all reading, thinking and communication.

### The Locale of Reading and Thinking

Reading and thinking which result in learning and which we today call human resource development must not be equated with the schools. There are a number of learning locales, of which the school is only one. Reading and thinking and the resultant learning can take place wherever a learning experience can be had, in the farm, in the factory, in the bank, in the cooperative, in the trade union, in the political party, in the primary child welfare centre, in temples, mosques and churches, in the innumerable learning programmes that we have developed all over, through our families and societies. In these continuous and widespread learning locales, the teacher will no longer be standing where he has been all this time at the front of the class or on a raised platform. He will be a learner, reading and thinking along with other learners, he may be prime *inter pares*, the first learner, because what he is searching for, whether it be through reading or thinking is the outline of the unknown future in which the other learners will have to live. This lightens the impossible task given to us teachers who are supposed to help students to learn to live in India in 2000 or 2010 or 2020 and beyond when most of our students would be only 10 or 20 or 30 years old, while we, the teachers, who only know the India of 30-40 years ago, when we learnt our reading and did our thinking. That is why we will have to join our students in making all learning locales a learning process, and not a teaching shop or an examination passing factory. How can we teach a future of which we have no knowledge or experience? And so we must join our fellow learners, there will be no teachers and no students, but all will be learners, who will be unfolding and discovering only through reading, thinking and interpersonal communication, this near impossible task set for us. Today our sources of reading are the printed books supported and further enlarged by the synchronised satellite, which we are sending up almost every few months, and the innumerable audio-visual learning tools that are spreading and multiplying all over us. The perspectives for reading and thinking are thus endless as we look into the future.



# Reading and the Evolution of Thinking

Gitika Dutta Dhupkar\*

Reading is kind of an innate drive that seizes a human being and makes him its instrument; makes him a man in the higher sense of the word, who reflects the contemporary thinking of mankind and is the carrier of the cultural, spiritual, social and aesthetic values of his time.

But in modern technological culture, with its mass media and fast pace of life, reading beyond the utilitarian purpose, is turning out to be an absolute value. It seems to have become an esoteric pursuit of a very impractical few, because a certain kind of irrelevancies or even futility is felt in reading for readings sake. Books may eventually have no relevance in the modern society. This is primarily the fault of our society and our educational system which have failed to examine the ways in which reading contributes to the creation of a holistic and organic community. Books transmit values that makes possible the communal life of the individuals of whom it is composed.

Although the relationship between reading and thinking is an individual, a subjective one, yet we have no doubt of its justification for its endowment of specific inner qualities, which may once again depend upon the purposefulness of the reader as to what extent he allows the mind to expand in more creative ways.

However, the main purpose of reading is the evolution of the thought process, from its natural and primitive thinking process to the more elevated — creative and imaginative one. Thinking, like any other higher activity, is a creative process, and the life truth of reading and its effect on thinking plays a very important part in this process. In this article I touch upon the effects of reading on the hierarchy of the thought process — efferent thinking, insightful thinking, creative and imaginative thinking, and reading against neurotic thinking.

## Reading and Efferent Thinking

Word power is to the mind what horse power is to car. Just as petrol is the fuel of a car, so ideas are fuel which keep the mind running. The difference between an educated and an uneducated person is not usually a matter of intelligence or even degree, it is simply that the educated man has a bigger stock

of concepts, knowledge, ideas and imagination, that culminate into an elevated thought process.

The education of the 21st century man is necessarily an enabling process, rather than an instructional one. It requires opening the whole of the world to the learner and giving him easy access to that world through reading. Thus reading for becoming a nation of readers holds a much broader view of reading. Reading cannot be incidental and need not have only an utilitarian purpose. The enjoyment of books is a valuable outcome of education itself. The major purpose of reading is taken as the individual development and enrichment of personality, development of insight and understanding, development of thinking and imagination, transmission of culture, the development of the taste in reading and the development of the intrinsic motivation to read.

Books are the universal aspect of thinking. Through reading all human beings order their world and shape reality. Reading develops cognitive and linguistic capacity, increased compassion and understanding of others; a more vivid imagination, a flexibility of thought and a greater power of appreciation of words and language. These values are the reward of a life time of wide reading, recognizable in the truly literate person. We are moving towards a future, at a more rational times in the history of our culture, reading will not need to be justified by extrinsic reason.

Good reading thus serves as the basis for a reinvigorated human education. We might expect it to contribute markedly to the creation of the genuinely educated person. Such a person might be defined in many ways, but perhaps the most effective definition describes as directly as possible what an educated person does.

A well read and educated person, in his intellectual life has the linguistic and analytic resources at his command to examine the complex situation in which he finds himself and to work his way towards reasonable understanding of his dilemmas and rational solutions of his soluble problems. In his emotional life, a well read person has the imaginative resources to comprehend and to come to terms with the intricate range of his natural feelings and to open himself to a variety of continuing and enrich-

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ing experiences in life itself. In public or engaged life, the well read person has the moral resources to confront the issues of his time, with the patience to discover the right course, the courage to pursue it, and the humility to conceive the possibility of being wrong. These are some of the attributes and thinking of a well read person, shaped and enhanced by a genuine love for reading.

### Reading and Insightful Thinking

Reading is the signature of civilization, and books are a bridge to a better world. At this moment in history, with an old decade tumbling into the present, it is incumbent upon all men to re-examine their roles in this civilization and in the contemporary world. In the face of all the current increasing pressures to dehumanise life, it is especially urgent for some segment of the society to proclaim a responsibility for preservation of those fragile but precious qualities — the personal, the human, the humane, those who go out to read good books are the inheritors of the humanities and thus become to some considerable extent the custodians and advocates of this society's humanistic and humanitarian values.

Books preserve fundamentally human values. These values need to be reexamined, and imbibed as to speak to the current and recurrent crisis of the human spirit which needs to be reaffirmed. In contemporary life, the forces at work to deprive man of his quality of humanness are many, and will increase in number and intensity in the decade ahead.

The modern society have worked feverishly to bring the blessings of the technological society to the entire country and in the process have emptied our mind by contracting and compressing our thinking, and diminished our imaginative conception of ourself and compassion for others. Men today live closer together, but exist further apart.

The responsibility of a society to improve the quality of life in any civilization, is to improve the quality of reading, or else, the values of culture and society will disappear from our thinking sphere. It is no exaggeration that, reading is the best nourisher of the mind, the growth of the imagination and the discovery and exploration of human and humane values.

The humanistic conception of reading is central to the individual's process of self-discovery and self-definition and also how he relates with other individuals in his life. After centuries of neglect, inner life is finally crying for its due. This hunger may save us from emptiness and sterility which is said to be the price of our material comfort towards a more emotionally meaningful and spiritually ful-

filling personal life. This institutionalization of feeling lies at the heart of good reading.

The effect of reading for insightful thinking is to strengthen, clarify, and articulate one's capacities, to unfold inward, by letting every precept and concept awaken its appropriate expression; develop nuances of feelings and inward assimilation of each perceived fact. These facts awaken thoughts in a reader, and these thoughts reveal something about the fact that deals with the higher, deeper, or truer aspects of nature, which is so penetrating and therefore, thoroughly educative, because he is informed as well as transformed by the knowledge he acquires.

There is a terrible division today between our public and private world, good reading helps us to understand our own private world which enables us to enter into the thoughts of others and to explore possibilities in other minds. We learn to use our knowledge and insightful thinking to expand our inner life and to enlarge and enrich our understanding of the outer world.

### Reading and Creative Thinking

The fate of our society may well depend upon the type of books our people read. The mastery of the automatic age requires a strong capacity for imaginative and creative thinking, a capacity whose well springs in the fountain of books. This capacity needs to be nourished, otherwise, future generations will be even less capable than ours of mastering their problems. Possibly due to the materialistic climate into which we are forced to live, our reservoir of imaginative thinking is shallow enough. In our questions, we ask for help; only to receive ready made answers which further dim our inquisitiveness and intuitive consciousness, and thus deprive us of an irreplaceable source of happiness and future strength. For answers when offered too easily block our intuitive lifeline and clog the narrow shaft for acquiring knowledge and information on a first-hand basis by reading and understanding.

Human matters and complex word matters are so complicated by interactive change and feedback loops that our ordinary linear thinking is unable to cope and needs to evolve. Most of the thinking we do in our daily life is purely descriptive. Reading directs our thinking in a certain way and enhances our lateral thinking, and releases us from the intelligence trap, and takes us onward to reactive thinking, where we have to react to, and hence sharpen our intuitive comprehension. The Janus thinking which wide reading activates, leads to diverse types of creative processes — visual, aesthetic, creative, emotive, critical, etc.

Reading acts as a catalyst to the imagination and inspires creative thoughts and more effective display of emotion. Reading also develops one's creative range and is the primary means of the education of imagination, it extends the potentialities of human experience and expands the awareness of human situation. Through the imagination, we experience others' views, values, and we encounter others' nightmares and realities, others' visions and dreams. Our possibilities expand and our choices multiply. By offering to us such choices and possibilities, by increasing the range of our experience and extending the boundaries of our vision, the imagination through reading develops and deepens that humanness that lies still within us.

### **Reading as a Safeguard against Neurotic Thinking**

The thinking habits of modern intellectualism build up a reservoir of volcanic content, reading sublimates some of our irrational thinking for more constructive and creative one. It chisels our thought process minimizing the dangerous angularities. For centuries, generations after generations grew up under the influence of books to become far less neurotic and desperate than modern man. Books have also shown to act as a protection from anxiety and criminal urges. Books and literature deal with man's inner life, his soul life, and become man's teacher in his quest for inner kinship and tranquility. Reading clears our analytic mind with creative and emotive thought which speaks directly to our innate understanding.

Books not only offer incentives to be good, but serve as our natural guide to psychic and emotional growth. They give food to our starved intuitive faculties, put them in their legitimate place, and keep them from seeking outlets in purely libidinous adventures. Such danger of perverted intuition exists. Moreover, the dreariness of our abstract intellectualism which robs us of our happiness, is responsible for our seeking joy in realms destructive to our mind and body. This futile search drives many of us to cruelty and crime as a means of abnormal satisfaction. But good literature, biographies, stories of valour and courage if permitted to bestow their blessings, can prolong happiness and provide the sense of security and sanity which one needs for the preservation of moral and mental health. Reading has been celebrated for ages as the most powerful healer and protector of the human soul. The bibliotherapeutic effect of books sustain many a person in hours of trial and grief. Books can also be the safest guide on our dangerous journey into life. It is good reading that gently leads our

inner perception from the world of chaos to the inner world of tranquility. It is they which bring purely qualitative faculties, such as joy and gratitude into proper relation with pleasure derived from material gifts.

Very few of us know the psychological effect of reading. Reading is a clue to one's consciousness, for books carry in an indelible script, an imprint of the childhood of the human race itself. When we read books, we must never forget that they deal primarily with our inner life, our soul. Their knowledge, wisdom, characters, wit, etc., have a psychological quality which purify our emotions and develop our innate understanding, and prove as a safe guide to lives ruined by lack of self control, or prematurely ended by guilt and despair. But what has knowledge to do with self-discipline? Knowledge serves as a mold for the volcanic content of the growing mind, whose degree of balance depends on it. Knowledge of a large number of confusing and apparently unrelated facts misshapes the personality into a mental and emotional structure both bizarre and discordant. On the other hand, knowledge imparted with the understanding that every item of information is but a piece, in the mosaic of an all encompassing wisdom, creates a harmonious structure promoting a sense of security as well as a feeling of freedom within the framework of purposeful necessity. It is knowledge again that gives shape to the character. It is this knowledge which is a true reflection of a meaningful universe where, our mind reflects the higher purpose underlying the order of the cosmos.

Reading thus reflects the life style of a society, reflecting the ideals, beliefs and seeking the soul of a people. The reading culture then, is the only means by which we may widen and deepen a total sensibility which alone may lead to that meaningful revolt or revolution which springs from a sensitivity to surroundings, resulting in an attempt at its transformation in the light of ideals, progress and a civilization apprehended through imagination and sensibility, nurtured by the best of books and enshrined in the greatest literature. Reading churns the crude materials of human consciousness and mental being, and filters the finer thought process, leading us to a higher level of psyche, higher values, and search for self-transcendence. A higher level of civilization does not set its goals to simply utilitarian purposes. It is impossible to imagine an evolving culture, where all efforts are concentrated on technological and scientific progress and totally deny the finer thought processes and sensitivities that is imbibed by good reading. No sane society can afford this imbalance, as much as any society can dare to progress without books.

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# Human Cognition : Reading and Thinking

Maharaj Singh\*

We possess a very unique tendency to see the things of our outside world, perhaps not as they are, but as we are. What we are is, what genetic components we are composed of, and to what experience we have exposed our genetic make-up. In our experience we accumulate enormous associations, feelings and emotions for various things, living beings, places, etc. In addition to our own private world, through the world of literature, scientific reports and mass communication media, we also get some selective samples of the private worlds of some other people. Not only this, we also get various samples of the experiences which are related to the natural environment and for which we always seem to remain curious. How do we accumulate vast experience of ourselves, other people and of the environment? Certainly we do have some very sophisticated input system for taking the information from outside as well as from inside (ourselves) world. The information of our body reaches to our brain through some form of biochemical language codes, whereas we have several ways of getting outside information into our brain.

Although dissemination of information has always been important for mankind, it had become increasingly important for us as we progressed through the era of civilization and reached the present era. The present era is no doubt known as 'information age'. Retrieval and dissemination of information plays very important role in our every day life. We have enormous amount of knowledge (information) in the form of written and recorded material for which we usually do not have enough time to go through, even some selected part of the same.

Interestingly, we are born dependent and this gives us some time to adjust to the environment and to develop our input system with the help of others, specially with the help of those who look after us when we are helpless infants. Very young children learn to read the emotional climate generated by their mothers or mother surrogates. How do we develop our senses for the crucial intake of the

information? If one makes the analogy of the working of our brain with the modern day computer, we have some system of intake of the information through our senses, then we transfer that information into some sort of bio-chemical coding system (like binary computer language), and after this, the information goes to our brain in the specific areas of specialization for processing the bits of information (like in the Central Processing Unit of a computer).

The main objective of the present article is to discuss the mechanism and importance of our input system. Among our senses the most powerful input mechanism is our visual system followed by auditory, tactile, smell, and taste systems. We have two forms of input receiving mechanism through our normal visual system. One is verbal form and the other is non-verbal. As very young children we first start with non-verbal form of (reading) input. For example, very young children learn to react to various type of faces showing different emotions, colours, musical or non-musical sounds, and to several other non-verbal stimuli present in their environment.

The first incidental verbal (linguistic) reading by many children takes place at around the age of 3 years and this is learned either through the programmes on television, particularly the advertisements or some other programmes (sesame street on American Public Broadcasting Service Network), or through the curriculums of the formal pre-primary schools. Often when on television an advertisement is presented repeatedly with one central message supported with some visual cues, the children pick up many of the particular messages without any conscious efforts on their part. It has been the common observation of many parents including myself that the children enjoy the advertisements more than they enjoy the stories and other programmes intended specially for them.

The verbal and non-verbal forms of reading formally start with the learning of the alphabets of the language. In Hindi language the children start with *Ka, Kha, Ga ...* in a manner that each letter has been associated with a picture of some known object. Similarly in English we teach the children like A for Apple and I for India (I just read in the

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newspaper that in Britain I for India has been in the books of the elementary or preschool children). Reading of the formal linguistic symbols (alphabets) through non-verbal pictorial forms of the objects, shows the importance of the non-verbal forms of expression. Very young children with different mother tongues, often learn to communicate with each other by using non-verbal symbolic or pictorial form of expression.

Non-verbal form of expression is often said to be a more powerful means of communication as perhaps it is easier to read this form of expressiveness as compared to verbal-linguistic form of reading through alphabets, words and sentences. An English proverb 'a picture is worth more than a thousand words' emphasizes the importance of non-verbal expressiveness. Both linguistic and non-linguistic forms of reading or input (expressive) mechanism seem to be complementary to each other. For example, in case of the individuals who have some sort of verbal language disorder causing the disruption of normal speech and hearing, it has often been found that those individuals perform better in the non-linguistic expressive tasks. However, it is not clear whether vice-versa is also true.

What is really meant by reading depends upon who is using the term and in what context. Reading has often been used as reading of faces, emotions, maps, architecture, landscape, palms, other person's mind and, of course, the reading of written scripts of the languages. Reading of alphabets, words, sentences, paragraphs, pages and books forms a hierarchy of decoding of the linguistic symbols and translating the same into some meaningful senses. Reading can be defined as "sequence of cognitive events leading to reconstruction of knowledge to incorporate the new ideas contained in the material".

According to educational psychologists reading is a form of problem solving mechanism. As such reading is considered to be an active cognitive process of seeking relationship to, differentiating from, and reconciling with the existing ideas. According to psycho-linguistic point of view reading is a selective process which involves partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input. As this partial and minimal information is processed, tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected, or refined as reading progresses. Reading, therefore is a process which involves recognition pattern of symbols which have

earlier been perceived. For example, reading along a particular sentence, a reader must retrieve and mobilize systems for recognizing words and phrases to their corresponding meanings, and subsequently utilize various cognitive processes for inferring, interpreting, and inductively or deductively arriving at conclusions and solutions to the problems.

Reading process undergoes changes as the reader becomes more mature. This shift might be due to the changes in our cognitive abilities and capabilities. Sometimes we are able to read with several creative interpretations. 'Reading between the lines' could be one example of some sort of reading at the deep level of our cognitive interpretation. On the other hand, if one thinks of reading at somewhat shallow level of cognition, one might say that even after going through the process of reading, there has been 'literal comprehension of the contents of read material'. The reading process has been closely associated with our thinking process.

Linguistic verbal reading, therefore can be defined as a process of translating signs and symbols into meanings and incorporating the new meanings into existing cognitive and affective system. The process of reading does not remain constant or static, but it undergoes changes as the reader becomes more mature. Such a shift progresses from simple association to decoding, to creative interpretation that extends the writer's message beyond an already existing conceptual framework. This shows somewhat close relationship between the process of reading and thinking. Of course, a thinking-reading process often varies with the specific purpose of the reader. Nonetheless, reading plays very important role in our cognitive make up and its continuous and exponential development.

Reading is both growth and growth producing which expands the intellectual horizon of the reader, not to mention that such an intellectual growth is accompanied by the changes in the physical organization of the brain. As our brain is fed with the ideas through reading, the storehouse of associations and of conceptualizations accumulates, thus making it increasingly easy to expand the reservoir of new ideas and to enhance our logical and creative potential at the exponential rate.

Reading has often been very helpful in improving upon our affective well being. We often derive pleasure from reading and this brings about posi-

tive affective changes in our 'self'. As we derive pleasure from reading in the early stages of our mental, physical and moral development, at the later stages of our development, it often becomes self-stimulating for us. If this happens, we do not need any outer reward or incentive to be actively involved in the reading process.

Lack of success of learning to read may result from lack of motivation or due to some organic problems, or the combination of the both. Many reading problems are caused by malfunction in the neural system. Hyperactivity and hypo-activity in the connections between the neurons cause problems in sustaining attention to the reading tasks. The organic disorder of learning disability is known as 'dyslexia', whereas difficulty in writing symbols due to the blockage in the effector neural system, is known as 'agraphia'. It is rather unfortunate that in terms the treatment of reading related difficulties due to neurological disorder, we only have some drug therapies and that too have some limitations and often cause some other side effects.

The motivation to learn to read is so strong that it is remarkable that a substantial part of our school population has many economic and social forces that makes reading an important part of living. Most jobs now require reading and writing abilities. Not only jobs, most leisure time activities require some reading ability to read leisure books and magazines. Reading also provides the reader with the freedom to assert his independence. Through reading one can learn new ideas and can also enhance his creative and intellectual potential.

The process of reading is mediated by visual perception in which similarities and differences of graphic symbols are compared. Such a visual discrimination depends on the adequate functioning of the eyes which respond to the light stimuli by encoding the inputs and transmitting the message to the brain. The visual data in the brain are integrated with other stimuli to become part of the storehouse of the ongoing process of accumulation of experience. Theoretical constructs suggest that the storage of the visual input data is in the nature of holographic rather than a photographic images.

The process of reading has been closely associated with the functioning of the brain and therefore it interacts with the overall cognitive process of the brain. All reading involves some creative interpretation of the contents. Creative reading provides framework and bases of many new ideas which can often be applied to test many hypotheses leading to

the theoretical constructs. Most readers are self directed in the selection of their reading materials. Based upon the concepts of psychology, the reading can be of several types, such as, semantic-logical, symbolic-mathematical, and emphatic-mystical.

In semantic-logical reading we evaluate the content for logical consistency. For example, when the reading material throws some light on a particular era or time period in sequence or the sources of knowledge are dispersed in archives, private collections, and libraries, we as creative readers follow the pattern of the semantic-logical type of reading approach. Such an approach of reading helps us to follow the organization of creative writing in the chronology of the events, evolution of ideas, analysis of trends, and in terms of the increasing complexity of the subject matter.

Symbolic-mathematical reading forms the basis for communication of most of the modern day empirical research. The ability to read in this area includes sophistication in the languages of mathematical modelling, computer, and of statistics. The use of such languages has become increasingly important as they have now spread from physical sciences through biological and life sciences to social sciences.

Similarly, emphatic-mystical reading has gained importance as the emotional content of inter communication has become increasingly important in our every day life. Sensitivity towards other people and training in sensitivity to one's own feelings are generating a literature of their own. Reading of our own enormous mystical-religious thoughts comes under the category of emphatic-mystical reading.

To summarise then, reading of both verbal and non-verbal forms of the material provides our brain a very healthy and much needed academic diet. Such a diet is necessary for our normal cognitive and physical development. Since we have huge bank of knowledge stored in the form of books, journals, serials, monographs and in microfilms, the only way to reach the depth of knowledge is through reading. It is therefore necessary that we should develop a habit of creative reading. Sometimes I wonder whether researches, discoveries, and inventions are altogether new pieces of knowledge or they are relocation, reinterpretation, reclassification of ideas of already existing knowledge. It might be true in many cases if not in all.

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# How Books Endure in My Life

C.R. Mitra\*

Books are the embodiment of the stock of knowledge of which we are legatee. Each book represents part of the pattern of knowledge and, in the ultimate sense, is related to every other book. Books in their present form are the instruments through which all human societies fulfil three major needs, namely the need to communicate, the need to teach and learn and the need to access information. Books have given rise to the belief that they have created a habit of reading and their special place in the scheme of things cannot be undermined. Some books continue for a long time to fill our horizon and we attach a concept of timelessness to these rare books, which we call classics. We have come to believe that there can be no society without books.

Nonetheless, an anxiety has been expressed whether the onslaught of innovative technology and the dominance of textbooks will threaten the place of books in our culture. Yielding to this anxiety we further worry whether the very curiosity towards knowledge and the generation of classics would be undermined. Let us first focus on technology that generates a nervousness. We must remember that it is this very technology of printing which transformed the human society by producing books for a larger reach at affordable price. Availability of printed books liberated human societies from the clumsy process of verbalism and crude technology which were the only means in the knowledge enterprise before the emergence of printing technology. It is equally possible to argue that technology-backed mass media (audio and video) is now available to us to extend the knowledge enterprise to that segment of the society which does not easily take to the travails of reading books. The new technology does something more. It supplements the printing technology in a way that avid readers of books are now further empowered.

Even a mere textbook, while pegged to the requirements of formal students and examinations, should open up vistas beyond the syllabus. In fact, hallmark of a good textbook is its ability to serve the

purpose of the teaching process and at the same time open up the entire architecture of knowledge of which syllabus is a mere part. It is thus that even among textbooks there are classics which have endured for a long time. It must be observed that even a successful cram note does not elevate itself beyond the need of temporary expediency. A word on technology-powered courseware would be in order at this stage. A courseware serves a contextual purpose and cannot by itself fulfil the requirements of the three needs mentioned earlier. Thanks to the modern technology, courseware is another means in making the teaching-learning process more effective and less expensive. It cannot replace textbooks. It can reach new segments and also supplement textbooks.

In the complexity of a knowledge society our very understanding of the word classics associated with the books must acquire a new meaning. The traditional meaning of classics is a book that captures our attention and imagination for a long time. While agreeing with this traditional definition I should like to suggest that a book also becomes a classic by its ability to integrate knowledge and also its ability to indicate further reading. In other words a classic is also a book that sees and says things in an extraordinarily original way.

While I can see that there is room for anxiety because of the onslaught of technology, technology by itself is neither endowed with good qualities nor bad qualities. It is the human use of technology that we make which is critical. If the creation of printing technology made it easier for us to have a learning society I would like to believe that the newer technologies will lead us towards a knowledge society.

My own anxiety is occasioned by other factors. The deadening uniformity that is found to be convenient in a technological society sometimes leads to political efforts to ban a book or threaten an author. The real danger is that the society which is required to move in the realm of intellection might relapse back to mere verbalism where conformity is demanded by the psychosis of fear.

I should now like to revert back to the main

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objective of this paper which is to narrate how in my life I discovered books to be enabling factors and thus they continue to endure in my whole being. While my journey into the domain of recorded knowledge began only through my textbooks, these same textbooks together with some other circumstantial developments made me seek out knowledge not always gained in the classroom or in the workshop of life. In order to narrate the unfolding of my experience it would be better if I also record what I observed amongst members of my immediate family. Maybe I would succeed in describing a universality of attitude and approach towards books which reinforces our faith that books will always endure in every human society as long as each society works out its own particular method of meeting the three basic needs enunciated earlier in the paper.

I cannot at all recall how I responded to books with pictures that were placed before me when I was a child. Perhaps I had reacted the same way as my one-year old grandson does now. He avidly pours over children's books and points his right index finger over the printed matter as well as the pictures, all the time making sounds with unformulated words. Even though he has the opportunity to watch the television screen and play with mechanical toys, his books continue to be his dominant preoccupation. If my observation is universal I am sure books will not lose out against the mass media of a consumer society even for a child who has yet to become a fully active human being.

My recollection of the various primers that I had to read to learn three languages is not precise. However, the essence of this experience is still vivid in my mind. My Bengali primer was written by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. I could quickly absorb the natural rhythm of the Bengali language that this primer conveyed to me. It was much later that I could appreciate Tagore's effort to create a new language in a modern form. While learning the Nagri alphabets, the lilt and softness of poorvi Hindi I could recognise as distinct from Khariboli which I discovered later. My English primer was better printed but my learning of the Roman alphabets was merely mechanical. I simply could not absorb the embodiment of the culture and the imagery of a distant society. My effort to learn the English language began merely as a means towards an end. It was later that I could enter into the grandeur of the language of Shakespeare and Milton. The point I wish to convey is that even a primer

is not a mechanical process of learning alphabets and to be conversant with a language. Good primers very skillfully present the nuances of a language as well as the vehicle to explore the world of knowledge.

My school and college textbooks generally failed to open new vistas for me. I must pay tributes to at least a minority of my teachers and well-wishers who attempted to induce me to go beyond the textbooks. Unfortunately I did not heed them at that time, because I was obsessed with the objective of doing well in examinations and pursue the acquisition of a degree with high grades. Yet in this limited objective I had to deal with the need to consult other textbooks in order to obtain a better understanding of the concepts and the means of answering questions in the examinations.

My encounter with textbooks were of two kinds. In the case of Mathematics I found that I was fascinated by mathematical skills where clarity of approach and economy of efforts are the hallmark of solving mathematical exercises even for preparing for an examination. This happened because my father, who loved Mathematics, introduced me to Mathematics even before I was enrolled in school in my late boyhood. The habit that my father inculcated in me stood in good stead throughout my life as far as the subject of Mathematics is concerned. In the case of Natural Sciences and Chemical Engineering, although the textbooks were written very well, I could only see a faint glimmering of the world outside the narrow confines of the syllabus.

This single minded approach was surely generated by the demands of school and college examinations. Not only that I did not heed the proddings of my well-wishers to come out of the well, I did not fully utilise the two opportunities that presented themselves to me. As a reward for passing the high school examination with high marks, an uncle of mine presented me with the life membership of the Allahabad Public Library. I would spend hours of leisure in this library primarily because I wanted to be competent to answer the General Knowledge questions. However, it is in this library that I discovered two fascinating journals *Popular Science* and *Popular Mechanics*. The memory of what I read in these journals revealed to me the relationship between the man-made world and the phenomenal world. The doors that I partially opened should have been opened wider. I wish I had done that because only then I would have discovered what



world the textbooks on Natural Sciences were trying to reveal to me. The second opportunity came to me in the person of my elder sister who always mothered me. She would often ask simple questions from my subjects in which I was supposed to be good in school and college. I found that my textbooks were not adequate to lucidly answer her questions. I would surreptitiously read supplementary books to be able to do some semblance of justice to the penetrating questions she would ask. Even this exercise was not eagerly sought out by me so that it was never frequent and sustained.

It must be something in the Indian educational system and its examination focus that I never discovered a relationship between the textbooks that I had to study in school and college and the Indian heritage that I absorbed at home. The epics and the fables I read at my mother's knees, the poems of Tagore which I recited at the drop of a hat, the folk opera and religious functions that I witnessed seemed to be a separate world and could not enter the world of modern science and mathematics that was confined in my textbooks.

Against this background of lost opportunities in my case, I could observe the contrasting behaviour of my two children. They could comfortably combine textbooks with a list of wider reading material outside their textbooks. Primarily I have to attribute this to my wife for her catholicity of taste and wider reading habits. When my wife and I were living in Kanpur, we would go once a week to the Civil Lines to do some basic shopping. It was difficult to drag the children from shop to shop. We would leave them at the Universal bookshop who were kind enough to allow the children to browse through books. When we returned hours later we would discover the children still squatting on the shopfloor and avidly reading as many books as they could manage. In fact, each kept a score and the competition was to out-read the other. I discovered this habit would not harm their studies. On the other hand they had a far larger reading list than I had ever had when I was their age. Once again I am convinced that this propensity is universal in all children and their love for books shall not dim.

The whole world of books outside mere textbooks was a matter of vague awareness until I went to Bangalore as a student. By joining a local Study Circle I obtained a key to this world and also discovered willing fellow travellers to walk through this world. The condition of the Club required that

each member must read a book in three days and then critically discuss its contents in the appointed seminar. Thus, the world of knowledge started opening out through self-learning effort as well as by hearing others making the same effort. I distinctly recall that this is the first time I started systematically reading literature, philosophy, political science, etc. But my curiosity was basically in the area which was considered as a proper preparation of an English gentleman. Readings on the Indian heritage was limited and was confined only to the contemporary important colossuses on the Indian stage. Further search for my Indian heritage had yet to wait. My journey from a mere purveyor of technical knowledge towards an appreciator and applicator of knowledge in the widest sense had yet to begin.

My attitude towards textbooks went through a paradigm shift when as a graduate student in USA I had to become familiar with the prescribed textbooks in Chemical Engineering. I could quickly see, for the first time, the outline of the contours of a process which is larger than Chemical Engineering. I had to discover that doing merely Chemical Engineering was not enough. I had to continuously drink from the fountainhead of basic sciences, mathematics, peripheral engineering and applied social sciences. It also dawned on me that perhaps the American educational process forced a student to walk on two legs — textbooks and supplementary books. I came to discover that engineering is an epitome of integration of techniques, skills and knowledge and depends on an integrated approach which ignores the artificial fragmentation of knowledge that traditional pedagogy practices. Thus, the very requirement of the curriculum forced me to read books far removed from Chemical Engineering unlike what had happened to me as a student in India.

Once again in USA another event happened which put me on the quest to identify and articulate my Indian heritage. Some good meaning American organisation in their simple minded way asked me to speak on various aspects of India. To my horror I had to conclude that I was hardly in a position to coherently speak on anything about India. My mind asked the embarrassing question as to what is the distinctiveness of this India that we love. To back out was not practical because of the honoraria they offered and also because it would hurt my pride. Thus, ensued another bout of self-learning through reading books written in English about India. In

fact, my introduction to India's ancient heritage, culture and even of my favourite poet Tagore came through reading books written in English, and mostly by foreign authors. Perhaps this development can be decried. But it offered me a semblance of balance between the dazzling West and what might be described as my Indian heritage.

When circumstances back home in India catapulted me into high administrative positions, I discovered that mere intuition and rule of thumb, howsoever valuable, were not enough. Once again I started reading books on management, scientific method, technological capabilities, educational theory, sociology, history and philosophy. Whether these helped me do my job better is not for me to assess. But they certainly enabled me to make quantum jumps from being a mere purveyor to an enabler. The deep satisfaction that is given to us to transform ideas and concepts into reality cannot be achieved through fluke. We have to expand our intellectual process through more input of knowledge available so inexpensively in books.

This encounter with books that began in my early childhood still continues. Admittedly I read now at a slower pace. But my clamour for and eagerness to read remain unabated because no matter what I do I need to do it effectively and usefully. It is obvious to me that books shall endure because we have to live this life that is given to us, not as a mere existence but to become a link between the past and the future, a transmitter from the previous to the coming generation.

My description of an experience with books would not be complete if I do not also convey how certain category of books stays in my memory. First is the set of books which I received as prizes or presents. Even now when I lay my eyes on these books I vividly recall the joy that was associated with those events. The second set of books under this category are the books that I authored or co-authored. I must admit that writing these books did accord some element of ego satisfaction. But again they put a new burden and obligation on me. I would re-read my own books and also read books written by later authors on the same subject. My mission is to discover whether what I stated in my own books could be stated more elegantly and effectively now.

I maintain that my own experience could not be very special. A whole lot of other people must have

discovered how books acted as food for thought and purpose in their cases. Books are a constant invitation to fresh ideas and fresh ways of doing things. Our individual role in society, no matter at what stage of development, obliges us to respond to the three needs mentioned earlier in this article. As long as we approach each and every book as we approach our temples of worship, all will be well with the human condition. Books and libraries are the integral part of our way of life. To entertain a thought that either will fade away is to concede that the very fabric of our life would be mutilated.

We talk about a knowledge society. Knowledge means that we subscribe to an intellectual process in everything we do. Books are the most inexpensive way of living up to the demands of a knowledge society and to become an effective member of the same. My belief that books shall endure is not derived from a mere faith, it is a part of a practical philosophy of life.

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# Global Dimensions of Knowledge

## Some Perspectives in the New Context

M.S. Ramamurthy\*

Many are interested in getting information of events. Many conveniently forget an information received on getting another piece of information. Quite a few however, are interested in understanding the concepts and fundamentals underlying events. Curiosity to get information and attempt to understand the events are manifestations of the desire in man to add to knowledge. And without at least some essential information even mere existence in modern world is not possible.

Going back into the history of human civilization one finds that man was afraid of nature. He moved into caves to ward off predators. He shifted his habitat away from places where natural calamities like floods were more frequent in their visitations. Today man would no longer be considered a man if he were to react similarly! Science and technology gave him the power to "conquer nature". The same science has now told man that there are limits to conquering nature and that he has to learn to live in harmony with nature. From defence to attack and subjugation and on to living in harmony with nature is an exciting story of man's progress in the onward march of human civilization. All this is the result of man's capacity to observe, to think, to rationalise experience and to evolve mechanisms — all of course in the pursuit of his enlightened self interest! Otherwise he would not have been an evolving man! What enables man in this pursuit is his knowledge about nature and knowledge about how to live and progress with nature as his aide and not as his enemy.

But what is knowledge? Is it an understanding of the 'other world'? The Bhagvadgita says 'the raft of knowledge ferries the worst sinner to safety'. Is it an understanding of the phenomenal world? Moliere observed: 'Without knowledge life is no more than the shadow of death'. Is knowledge an understanding of 'man'? The best study of mankind is the study of man, it is said. What is the character of knowledge? How is it obtained? Is it through observation, experience or reflection? What is the place of education and training, of listening and reading in the whole scheme of things? If our attempt is to gain

knowledge about knowledge and its effective transfer these questions are no doubt important to be answered. Epistemology of knowledge is not the focus in this article. We are here concerned with the place of knowledge, its importance, its utility in the economic activities, its generation and transmission — all across national frontiers or in other words, in the global context. Knowledge has been centre stage in ensuring the onward march of human civilization. Today, knowledge is centre stage in all economic activities. Indeed, the factors of production are no longer only the conventional ones — capital, land and labour. Technology, Time and Knowledge are also factors of production. Indeed, the relative importance of these various factors of production has clearly tilted towards knowledge. Japan for example increased its industrial production 2½ times between 1965 and 1985 without even hardly increasing its raw material and energy consumption. This was achieved by adding knowledge to its productive process.

The creator of knowledge — knowledge as defined above — is no longer a recluse sitting in a forest reflecting in isolation undergoing personal privations. Today he has an institutional support and a whole set of tools to aid him. Information, books, scientific and technological instruments and above all interaction with peers are necessary for discovery or invention. It is only the well equipped in terms of prior knowledge that can pursue knowledge. Moreover, these tools are expensive in economic terms and therefore not all can have access to them. It is within these two constraints that global dimensions of knowledge get hedged in.

If knowledge has moved centre stage in economic activities, economic forces take over in the movement of knowledge across national frontiers. Economics it is that then decides the free flow aspect. But more importantly even if economic forces are so aligned through some mechanism that a reasonably free flow is ensured, there is one other more important aspect which we may call as 'enabling aspect'. By this we mean the ability to use knowledge for productive purposes. Here in comes the importance of education and training.

We proceed on the hypothesis that all men are equally endowed. While some have been 'fortunate' to have had the benefit of education and training

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with access to the 'tools' mentioned above and have acquired a certain level, there is a majority which has been less fortunate in this matter. This may be a matter of resources but in today's world, moving to another metaphor, the world simply cannot afford to allow deserts to advance and make do with living in isolated, far flung oases. If the world is one geographical entity, a boundary-less mass of the earth, homosapiens are also to be one — not differentiated amongst themselves but only as mankind from other living organisms. From this perspective it is clear that all men need to be educated and trained to the maximum so that everyone is at the same level — not the level of the lowest common denominator but that of the highest common multiplier. This has to be and is the ideal. It is a collective responsibility therefore of all to see that all are brought up to the maximum level of understanding, ability and performance. This is what HRD is all about. How has this function to be discharged is another matter. But it is clear that continued evolution to a better society can be sustained only this way.

Obviously free flow of knowledge, irrespective of the particular form in which knowledge may have got encoded, is a necessary concomitant to the above. While this part may be clear to all and even conceded, economic considerations surrounding costs of discovery/invention, their potential for economic exploitation by the individual discoverer/inventor, by the community or the state which invested money in the task, is a dimension which affects free flow. One can look at this from a philosophical or idealistic point of view and state that barriers being erected in free flow are unwarranted. But philosophy does not produce bread, what to speak of butter! Economic compulsions are a fact of life. We therefore have to reckon with reality and accept that an absolutely free (i.e., without cost) flow of knowledge is just not possible however desirable that may be. The negotiations on what has come to be known as 'Intellectual Property Rights' and TRIPS (Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights) — fall-outs of Dunkel Draft and GATT Agreement — are a recognition of this fact. A regulatory mechanism designed to effect a balance between interests of generators of knowledge and its potential users worldwide is now a reality. In this sense it could be viewed as a necessary barrier to free flow of knowledge. To what extent such a mechanism confers a disproportionate advantage to one group is a matter of detailed investigation.

But one thing that surely emerges is the recognition that knowledge has global application. Knowledge generated in one clime, by one person or by one group or in one area or in one discipline cannot remain confined to that domain. It sure is bound to transcend both physically tangible and

also intangible boundaries. To the extent that an intended user can have access to knowledge only on payment is a barrier. In an unequal world, unequal in terms of many parameters, an idealistic attitude is an impossible proposition in practical terms. The important thing is to recognise the handicaps and work, within given parameters, towards creation of knowledge which would get rewards of 'Intellectual Property Rights'.

The Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations gives an impetus for creating intellectual assets given the fact that a system exists to protect the intellectual rights. This appears the only constructive way of making knowledge acquire global dimensions in the changed context.

What are the issues before India? Can our universities, our R&D establishments and our training industry seize this opportunity? I see no reason why they cannot. We have one of the largest higher education systems in the world. We have 1/3rd of the world's scientific and technical trained manpower. Education is no exotic to India. We have a rich heritage in training. Indeed, Indian manpower has done India proud wherever they have gone and whatever positions they have occupied. The crucial question is: Can we create conducive environments for achieving in the new context. It is clear however, that unless this is done, economic subjugation will not be far behind.

A further word of caution also seems necessary. It would be naive to be complacent on the enhanced flow of foreign direct investment into the country. Such a flow may be for purposes of trade and enhancing the profits of the investor. What becomes necessary is a development of the necessary infrastructure, a conducive environment and a thrust to develop new technologies linked with the economic policy which is aimed at exploiting the global market. A faith in the capabilities of our manpower should impel all — policy makers, planners and implementers down to all levels — to strive and make it happen. These are some of the perspectives in the new context.

Whitehead has said, 'Education is the acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge. The crucial issues therefore are: Are we going to heed the signals? Are we going to effectively utilise our considerable infrastructure already available in education and training? Are we agreed to provide conducive environments therein? Above all, are we ready to reorient our policies on education, skill development and training — all part of HRD — such that both public and private sectors jointly play their role in effectively meeting the twin challenges of 'Global dimensions of knowledge' and 'Globalisation of the economy?' One thing sure is given the will, we can. And, I hope, we will.



# Book Development Policies in Asia

Abul Hasan\*

## Book and the other Mass Media

Before discussing the Book Development Policies in Asia, it may not be out of place to allude to the prospects of the book in the age of multi-media because in the present era of communication explosion, books can no longer be separated from other mass media. Yet, the book has certain special characteristics which enable it to hold its own as the most essential tool of learning and communication.

Books have already demonstrated their vital contribution to individual fulfilment, social growth and international understanding. They serve as a repository of the cultural heritage of a nation and a valuable instrument of preserving and disseminating it. The printed word endures for successive generations of readers and is read over and over again. Books are the simplest, most easily handled and readily accessible means of communication and education.

Books convey information, specially of a high order of complexity, with more penetration than do the electronic media. With more enjoyable and colourful transmission of information and knowledge (rather than wisdom), the instant media appear to have a more agreeable consumption and can easily reach larger number of people simultaneously than books. Yet, reading a book engages and occupies an individual far more deeply than listening to radio or watching television or video. Hence retention of the information conveyed is more enduring. In other words, the book serves basic, advanced and continuing education in depth in a way in which radio, television and other mass media cannot. The reader has to make a creative effort to receive the message, to reconstruct it and interpret it into his own thought pattern. Unlike the cinema or the television viewer, the reader has also the advantage of regulating at will the rate at which the different sequences are presented to him and to return to earlier passages as and when necessary. With this possibility of interpretation, reflection and retrospection, the reader is not merely at the receiving end but is in constant dialogue with the

author. A great quality of the book is its inexpensiveness. The book industry is capable of efficient organisation in small enterprise. In developing countries the book industry continues to be labour-intensive and its claims on the capital resources of a nation are quite modest. Even in the most advanced countries, book production represents hardly one percent of the Gross National Product.

The book industry exerts social influence far greater and more pervasive than its economic size indicates. In most developing countries of Asia book production is generally a free enterprise, whereas the electronic media like radio and television are owned and controlled by the State. Books therefore play a more objective and impartial role in responding to social requirements of communication. Moreover, with the exception of a few cases of subsidised publications, a book is financed entirely by the price which the purchaser pays for the final product. Because of its independence from advertising revenue with which newspapers, mass circulation magazines and to some extent radio and television are influenced, the book is a vehicle for the new, experimental voice, and for the expression of minority views, dissent and criticism.

In short, the book possesses certain peculiar advantages over the electronic media, viz. endurance, economy, accessibility, freedom of choice and control of use. However, the other mass media have their own supporting role in education and communication. In the world of today, none of these media can yield optimum results if they are utilised to the exclusion of others. In some industrialised countries which produce a large number of titles and at the same time make an abundant use of the electronic media, it has been found that after a sharp initial expansion, the rate of development in broadcasting and telecasting is showing a progressive tendency to drop back to the level of that for books. Indeed in a rational information system the increasing variety of ways and means of imparting knowledge or making communication does not result in the replacement of the approach — the printed word — by another — the voice or the picture; but, on the contrary, it gives rise to the need for a composite approach combining all operations of the mind for its greater development. A judicious com-

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munication policy should make a balanced use of various media to maximise the impact.

### World Book Production — Progress and Imbalance

The increasing use of electronic media has not led to any decline in book production. The world book production continues to rise in both developed and developing countries and the world today produces one new title in about half a minute. According to the latest available Unesco statistics, the total world output in 1990 amounted to 842,000 titles. Within three and a half decades, global book production has tripled. Despite this phenomenal increase, the gains are not evenly shared and the bulk of the demand remains unsatisfied in all the developing regions. With 28 percent of world population, America and Europe produce 70 percent of the world titles. In contrast, Africa with 12 percent of the world inhabitants accounted for 1.5 percent of the global book output. The average number of titles per million inhabitants was 159 for the whole world — 20 for Africa, 73 for Asia, 204 for America, 454 for Oceania and 565 for Europe. The area of scarcity is thus spread over all Africa, all Asia excepting Japan, all Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand. With three-fourths of humanity, the developing regions produce about one-fourths of the world titles. Table 1 gives a global view of the level of book production and population in 1990.

### The Asian Scene

Let us examine the Asian scene in some detail. With about 59 per cent of world population, Asia produced over 27 per cent of the world titles, which is the highest percentage ever reached by Asia. The latest available figure — 228,000 titles in 1990 — will not be so impressive if we exclude the contribution of China, the largest book producing country in the region whose data was not included in the Unesco book statistics before 1980. Table 2 indicates Asia's share in world book production and in world population since 1955, showing the world figures underneath in brackets.

Asia is the largest reservoir of illiteracy in the world and poses a challenge bigger than ever before if one looks at the absolute numbers involved. Although the rate of literacy has been increasing, so is the absolute number of illiterates. India alone accounts for about 450 million illiterates, though the literacy rate has jumped from 16.7 per cent in 1951

to over 50 per cent in 1993. As with literacy, so with book production. There is an impressive increase in the absolute number of titles produced in Asia from 54,000 in 1955 to 228,000 in 1990. Yet in terms of per million inhabitants, book production has expanded from 65 to merely 73. Table 3 indicates the number of titles produced in Asia in descending order in the year for which latest figures are available.

Table 3 is a good index of the wide variations in the book production level of the various countries of the region — ranging from just 25 to over 73,000 titles per year. In a situation like this, it is difficult either to generalise or take specific cases, country by country. Yet certain common features can be identified in a majority of the countries with differences in degree but not in kind, and exceptions can be added where necessary.

With undue reliance on book imports, indigenous authorship and publishing are under-developed in Asia, although ironically, it was in Asia, particularly in China and Korea — that the process of printing originated with wood block images much before the movable type was invented in Europe. The multiplicity of Asian languages generally leads to a fragmented market resulting in low print runs — 500 to 5,000 copies on an average — excepting textbooks, and to high production cost. The real problem, however, is not so much the proliferation of languages as the paucity of potential readers. Owing to poor literacy rates, low purchasing power and under-developed reading habits, South Asia with 23 major publishing languages accounts for a small fraction of the number of titles published in Europe which has about the same population and a larger number of main literary languages.

As for the languages of publication, English continues to lead the field in many countries of South and Southeast Asia. In India, for example, about 40 percent of the titles published each year are in English (which makes India the third largest producer of books in English after the USA and the UK), the remaining 60 per cent titles being in the 15 or so recognised national languages. English dominates in the Philippines, Singapore, Pakistan, Malaysia and Sri Lanka also. English in these countries continues to be the language of the elite and is scattered in urban centres whose population can most afford to buy books and where books are easily sold to a ready market. The local book industry in these countries is handicapped by the in-built resistance of the English-speaking minority and

competition with more experienced and professionally organised English-language publishers within and outside national frontiers.

As regards the types of books produced, the region is badly in need of technical books, but gives prominence to social sciences, with pure and applied sciences representing about 10 per cent of the total output. In short, the overall situation is not satisfactory and the book supply target set for 1980, i.e. 80 pages of strictly educational books per person per year, by the 1966 Tokyo Meeting of Experts on Book Production and Distribution in Asia is still far from realisation.

### The Brighter Side

The brighter side of the Asian book scene is of course the prosperous book industry of Japan, one of the largest book producing countries of the world with an extremely wide variety of books and magazines. The publishing industry of Japan has generally maintained an annual growth rate of about ten per cent, though the annual increase in sales is more in favour of magazines than books. However, the Japanese book industry is faced with the problems of rapid progress of audio-visual media resulting in the diversified interests of the reader and generally declining print-runs.

In terms of number of titles produced, the largest book producer in the region is China where publishing has been expanding by leaps and bounds. China is assigning high priority to children's books and textbooks which represent about one-fourths of the titles produced. A welcome development has been the setting up of a Promotional Association for International Cooperation under the Publishers Association of China, which is designed to strengthen co-publication and other cooperative arrangements with foreign counterparts. The major hurdles in book development in China seem to be lack of professional skills in editing and the predominance of a mixed production technology.

The Republic of Korea, the second largest book producer in Asia, has also shown a sudden fillip in the volume of publications though the bottlenecks like inadequate distribution mechanism and low reading level continue to persist. A happy development is the establishment of a Korea Publishing Fund jointly by government and publishers to provide soft loans to needy publishers and the setting

up of Korean Publishing Research Institute to carry out research and surveys in the field of books. It may be interesting to note that these three better-placed countries in the region publish primarily in their own national language. India, which is a multi-lingual publishing country, has the distinction of publishing books in 22 local languages and exporting them to over 80 countries of the world.

### Meeting the Book Needs

Whatever be the book development stage in each country, the countries of the region are not lagging behind in their endeavours to democratise education which is no longer seen as a peripheral sector, but as one of the core elements of the development process. Education is not equated merely with schooling or scholarship, but is conceived as a life-long process and an essential input for individual fulfilment and national progress.

In the middle of these vibrations, the basic tool of education, i.e. the book, is not yet an active partner. Despite a growing belief that books constitute an essential and vital component of educational expansion, the book development process is still without a matching fillip as it has not been able to keep pace with educational expansion, resulting in wide gaps between the demand and the supply of essential reading material.

The book needs of Asia form a formidable list. As literacy grows in the years that follow, the requirements would multiply and pose a bigger challenge. It goes without saying that unless relevant books are available in requisite quantities to the masses of this vast continent, there would hardly be any real improvement in various programmes of educational development and indeed in the whole process of individual fulfilment and national reconstruction. A real breakthrough will be possible only when effective steps are taken to promote the indigenous book industry in complete harmony with local interests and requirements. This presupposes proper planning for book development under a well defined national book policy.

### Planning for Book Development

Planning for book development entails sustained and systematic efforts. Firstly, there has to be a proper mechanism to coordinate and execute book development plans. The idea of establishing such a mechanism was floated in the 1966 Tokyo

meeting and continues to be endorsed in almost all subsequent book development seminars and conferences. A number of book development councils or similar bodies have since been set up and continue to be created in all parts of the world. There is a growing awareness of their value as demonstrated by their effectiveness in allowing all members of the book community both from public and private sectors to speak with one voice in order to influence the decision-making process vital to national book development.

In Asia, which took the lead in this regard, national book councils or similar institutions exist in many countries viz. Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Although these bodies are not equally active, they are generally making a significant contribution in overcoming the formidable obstacles faced by the respective countries in their efforts to create and expand indigenous publishing infra-structure.

In view of the crucial problems of book development still persisting in Asia, a regional consultation of experts convened by Unesco in New Delhi in 1986 adopted guidelines for drawing up a National Book Development Plan which, *inter alia*, included easy accessibility to books by all segments of society, promotion of the reading habit, availability of quality reading material at reasonable prices, development of a strong library network, creation of a single mechanism for book development planning and coordination and designation of a nodal Ministry to ensure successful implementation of the book development policy and plans and to review the progress of implementation periodically. The Consultation was of the opinion that a National Book Development Plan should be approved by the highest appropriate authority so that there was no ambiguity with regard to its implementation. With these guidelines, the Consultation recommended to Unesco member-states in Asia to assign high priority to book development, more specially to the preparation of a National Book Policy and to have proper mechanism or agency for book development for its implementation.

### South Asian Consultation

Seven years after the New Delhi Regional Consultation, a sub-regional consultation was organised in New Delhi in August 1993 to take a stock of the situation. This time the initiative was taken by

the Afro-Asian Book Council (AABC) set up in New Delhi in 1990 with the primary objective to achieve intellectual self-reliance in the field of books through mutual cooperation between Asia and Africa. Under the auspices Unesco Asia-Pacific Programme for Reading Promotion and Book Development (APPREB), the AABC was assigned the task of convening a sub-regional Consultation pertaining to the status of national book policies and functioning of National Book Councils in South Asia. As the theme of the meeting was basically important for all developing countries, delegates from Malaysia and Kenya also joined the Consultation besides participants from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The Consultation was of the opinion that the formulation of a national book policy should be one of the objectives of the National Book Development Council. Ideally with the support of government, the Councils could on a priority basis draft a national book policy as an integral part of the national development plan. A national book policy should be in conformity with the country's national language policy and ensure a regular supply of books in local languages particularly at the grassroots level and be supported by the other mass media. A national policy for book development should also endeavour to maintain a proper balance between textbooks and general books and between indigenous and foreign publications. It should not only ensure adequate infra-structure facilities for the producers and distributors of books but also safeguard the interests of the authors and the readers.

The Consultation was convinced that a National Book Policy was needed not only for South Asia but for the whole of Asian region, if not the entire developing world. However, a National Book Policy has to be tailor-made to suit the circumstances and to fit the situation in each country. It was reported that four countries in the Asian region have made some effort in this direction. India was among the first developing countries to announce its book policy parameters. As an integral part of the National Policy on Education, the Indian Book Policy envisages availability of books at low prices, easy accessibility of books to all segments of population, promoting the reading habit, encouragement to creative writing and to translation of foreign books, production of quality books for children (including textbooks) and library development. Another initiative in this direction has been taken by Bangladesh where the Ministry of Cultural Af-



fairs set up a high level committee in August 1992 to formulate a Book Policy. With the assistance of many working groups and a Core Committee a draft National Book Policy was prepared and approved by the Standing Committee on Cultural Affairs of the National Parliament in December 1992. The policy is now awaiting approval of the National Cabinet. The objectives of the policy include need-based book imports, identification of book export markets, effective implementation of copyright laws, production of suitable books for mass literacy, library development and readership promotion. An action plan has also been worked out for proper implementation of the book policy and a National Book Policy Implementation Committee has been envisaged consisting of experts and knowledgeable persons in the related fields.

### Book Policies in Southeast Asia

Malaysia took the lead in Southeast Asia and formulated a National Book Policy in cognizance of the fact that books enrich the life of individuals and can also help to promote a common understanding and peace in a multi-racial, multi-cultural society. The policy was initially framed by the National Book Council of Malaysia and approved by a Committee of the Cabinet in November 1988. The objectives of the Malaysian Book Policy are to ensure that books discharge their functions effectively and problems of publishing, distribution and readership and those relating to manpower requirement and economics of book publishing are handled in totality. The main recommendations in the policy relate to the upgradation of the status of the Malaysian Book Development Council, recognition of publishing as an essential industry, definition of professional standards for the book industry personnel, direct subsidy for the publication of higher education texts and general books of national interest, long-term campaign for promoting the reading habit and the widening of distribution outlets.

In this connection mention should also be made of the efforts made by the Book Development Association of the Philippines which has drawn up a National Book Policy and a corresponding National Book Development Plan to serve as the enduring basis for fostering the progressive growth and viability of the book publishing industry. There is a three-fold thrust in the Philippines Book Policy which aims at (1) developing a book industry through a system of incentives and assistance, (2) promoting readership and making good books

widely accessible, and (3) providing better protection for the intellectual property rights of authors and publishers. The Philippines document has recommended the setting up of a National Book Development Board to oversee the implementation of the book policy.

The New Delhi Consultation noted with satisfaction that the Asian region was fully seized of the need to formulate a National Book Policy and some countries have already made a beginning in this direction. The meeting however noted that there has not been any proper coordination or interaction among the concerned countries while drafting their national book policies. In order that the experience gained is shared with other countries, the meeting entrusted this task to the Afro-Asian Book Council which would now act as a clearing house of information on National Book Policies and National Book Councils in Asia and Africa. The New Delhi Consultation identified certain guidelines which might help in framing such policies and worked out a *modus operandi* for the preparation, adoption and implementation of the book policy. The meeting also suggested ways and means of revitalising the National Book Councils so that they can operate their book development policies effectively. It is hoped that this exercise would accelerate the growth of indigenous book industries in developing countries on sound lines with a solid base.

In conclusion, let me revert to what I said at the beginning. In our multi-media society, books are not yet an "endangered species". There are, hopefully, signs in the developing world to make books continue to reign as a storehouse of knowledge, a repository of culture, a social asset and a valuable pastime. In a well-balanced national communication policy, books deserve a pride of place. It is a different matter if in the wake of developing technology, certain types of books may have to be used with the help of accessories like magnetic tape or gramophone record. It is also true that some select libraries may prefer to keep certain printed pages in the form of micro-fiches, micro-films or CD-ROMs. But that is a question of form and style, not of substance or content. The message remains in tact. If at all there is a challenge, it relates to the book of the future, not the future of the book. As a former Director-General of Unesco remarked, "the problem is not whether the books have a future, but whether in the future of which they are already assured, they will be capable of fulfilling the tasks incumbent upon them".

**Table 1. World Book Production and Population — Region-wise, 1990**

Region	Number of Titles	Titles per million Inhabitants	Percentage Distribution of Titles	Percentage Distribution of Population
World Total	842,000	159	100.0	100.0
Africa	13,000	20	1.5	12.1
America	148,000	204	17.6	13.7
Asia	228,000	73	27.1	58.8
Europe (including former USSR)	441,000	565	52.4	14.9
Oceania	12,000	454	1.4	0.5
Developed Countries	600,300	491	71.3	23.1
Developing Countries	241,700	59	28.7	76.9

Source: Adaptation from *Unesco Statistical Yearbook 1992*.

**Table 2. Asia's Share in World Book Production and Population (1955-1990)**

Year	Total Book Production	No. of titles per million inhabitants	Percentage of World Book Production	Percentage of World Population
1955	54,000 (269,000)	65 (131)	20.1	41.1
1960	51,900 (332,000)	53 (144)	15.4	41.9
1965	61,000 (426,000)	57 (168)	14.3	42.2
1970	75,000 (521,000)	62 (187)	14.4	43.2
1975	88,000 (572,000)	65 (184)	15.3	44.2
1980	138,000 (715,000)	53 (161)	19.3	58.2
1985	189,000 (798,500)	67 (165)	23.7	58.3
1990	228,000 (842,000)	73 (159)	27.1	58.8

N.B. Figures prior to 1980 do not include China.

Source: Adaptation from *Unesco Statistical Yearbook 1992*.

**Table 3. Book Production in Asia — Country-wise**

Country	Year	Number of Titles
China, Peoples Republic of	1990	73,923
Korea, Republic of	1990	39,330 @
Japan	1987	36,346
India	1990	13,937
Thailand	1990	7,783
Turkey	1990	6,291
Iran, Islamic Republic of	1989	6,289
Malaysia	1990	4,578
Afghanistan	1990	2,795
Sri Lanka	1990	2,455
Singapore	1983	1,927
Pakistan	1981	1,600
Indonesia	1990	1,518
Vietnam	1981	1,495
Bangladesh	1988	1,209
Philippines	1990	1,112
Kuwait	1988	793
Mongolia	1990	717
Cyprus	1990	692
Burma	1985	673
Qatar	1990	521
United Arab Emirates	1990	281
Nepal	1989	122
Laos, People's Republic of	1990	109
Maldives	1983	33
Brunei Darussalam	1990	25

@ According to the data furnished by the Korean Publishers Association the number of titles produced in 1990 was 24,783 excluding pamphlets, government and research institutes publications, periodicals and school textbooks.

Source: *Unesco Statistical Yearbooks, 1990, 1991 and 1992*.

# Information for Social Transformation

## The Catalytic Role of Information Professionals

A.R. Sethi\*

### Information & Society

At no point of time any society has lived without information. But at no point of time information has played such an important role in the transformation of a society as it is doing today. Information bestows power. The present division in the society — at the international, national or local levels — between the North and the South, between the West and the East, between the rich and the poor, is nothing but the manifestation of mal-distribution of information. The information rich are materially rich, the information poor are materially poor. It is not the natural resources, it is not more of the industrial infrastructure, it is not even the manpower potential of a country that makes it rich, it is the information resource that endows it with power, with other resources. Hence the goal before any society today is to become information rich.

The term for such a society is 'information society', a society in which a large segment of population — ranging between 30 - 50% is engaged, directly or indirectly, in the production, organisation or dissemination of information, a society in which about 2/3 of the national income is generated by the information sector, a society that is knowledge-intensive, knowledge-generating and knowledge-based.

The march toward such a society has begun in the West. Before long it is bound to start in developing countries too. However, there is, or there ought to be, difference between the perception of the two regarding information. Whereas in the West, information is treated as a commodity, to be bought and sold, subject to the rules of the market, in developing countries' perception information needs to be harnessed for the complex task of nation building and socio-economic transformation, that is, essentially for development purposes. For us, information is a social resource, a social right and a social function. Access to information is the right of every human being.

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It is primarily due to the difference between the perception of the two that the proposed New International Information Order, a subject of a lot of discussion at the Unesco and other fora during early 1980s, has made no headway. However, where politics has proved to be an obstruction, information technology has proved to be a blessing. Telecommunication, satellites, audio-visuals are breaking the artificial barriers between countries. Thus each country is bound to experience transformation in the coming years.

The discussion below elaborates on these themes and places the role of information organisations and information professionals, including the librarians, in the envisaged social transformation in developing countries.

### A. Social Role of Information

*Proposition 1 : Information is a social resource, not an article of merchandise*

(a) Information is a social right, a social function. Its aim is to make people more aware, to give them full understanding of the economic and political dimensions of their problems on both the national and international planes, and of their ability to participate in the decision-making process.

(b) If information is accepted as a social resource, it follows then that access to information should be the right of every human being. Freedom of expression, enshrined in constitutions the world over, is meaningless without right to information. The right to information must embrace all kinds of information and not merely access to pedagogical or technical expertise. This applies to information produced within the country as well as without.

(c) The social role of information has been visualised by the MacBride Commission on New International Information Order (NIIO) in terms of three objectives :

(i) *Socialization*, that is, the provision of a common fund of knowledge which would enable people to function as effective members of the soci-

ety in which they live and which fosters social cohesion and awareness, thereby permitting active involvement in public life.

(ii) *Motivation*, by promoting the immediate and ultimate aims of each society and the stimulation of personal desires and aspirations; the fostering of the individual or community activities geared to the pursuit of agreed aims; and

(iii) *Integration*, providing all persons, groups and nations access to the variety of messages which they need in order to know and understand and appreciate each others' living conditions, viewpoints and aspirations.

## **B. The Information-Rich & The Information-Poor**

*Proposition 2 : Information is power. Its mal-distribution tends to divide the society — global or native — into the information rich and the information poor, and is the cause of other inequalities — economic, political, social.*

(a) The current division of the world into North and South or West and East may be viewed in terms of information-rich and information-poor as well as information-supplying and information-dependent.

(b) Imbalances in information exist between (i) developed and developing countries; (ii) countries having different political and socio-economic systems; (iii) developed countries with same political and socio-economic systems; and (iv) developing countries themselves.

(c) In the information rich countries, information is treated as a commodity, to be bought and sold, and is subjected to the rules of the market. This conflicts with the developing countries' concern that information needs be harnessed for the complex task of nation-building and socio-economic transformation; that is, essentially for development purposes.

(d) The trans-national dominated world system today operates through what Juan Somavia terms as an 'arsenal of diverse but converging instruments', consisting of

- (i) the political-military-intelligence service dimension;
- (ii) the economic-industrial-trade dimension; and
- (iii) the communication-advertising-culture dimension.

(e) Information is a multi-billion dollar industry

in the information-rich countries, particularly the United States. According to an estimate, 80% of worldwide transmission and processing of information data is done by the United States alone. This monopoly of information handling has caused dissensions among the information-rich countries themselves. Canada, Australia and EC countries have expressed discontent with their dependence on the U.S., as the Eastern European countries have had complaints about dependence on the erstwhile U.S.S.R.

(f) It is estimated that in the industrialised countries of the world, about 1/3 of total current employment is in the information processing sector, and this proportion is increasing day by day. Similarly, the contribution of the information sector to their Gross Domestic Product, hovering presently around 60%, is on the increase. In case of developing countries, the corresponding figures are around 10% and 30% respectively.

(g) In the developed world, there is one copy of a daily in circulation for approximately every 3 inhabitants. In the poorer regions, it is one for every 30 persons. In Asian countries, the figure is 1 for every 50 persons. Eight African countries and three Arab States have no daily newspapers at all, while 13 countries in Africa have only one each.

(h) The whole information and communication order, prevailing presently at the international level, is a part of, and in turn props up, the inequitous system that creates and sustains a structure of neo-colonialism.

## **C. Free Flow of Information**

*Proposition 3 : At the international level, a free flow of information between the information-rich and the information-poor can lead toward a New International Information Order (NIIO).*

(a) The seers of the yore spoke of the world being a single family; *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, they chanted. In our own time, we are witness to an era in which the world is becoming a 'global village'. The existing information communication order has sucked into its vortex the remotest regions of the world. All is not well, however, with the present order.

(b) If the world is visualised as a 'global village', then all nations must participate in a single information system, free from political or any other subjective colouring. All barriers to information between all nations must go, so that each nation can put a



right value on the work of others. In a 'global village', pockets of information affluence cannot survive for long without being swamped by the surrounding mass of ignorance. As such, it is in the interest of information-rich North itself that the information-poor South is levelled up. However, this help should not result in a situation where its powerful and the mighty rule the roost and the poor and the meek pick up the crumbs around the table.

(c) Following the campaign within the United Nations for a New International Economic Order, Unesco, stimulated by pressure from the developing countries, proposed the forming of a New World Information and Communication Order in early 1980s. Unfortunately, Unesco's attempts at changes in the information patterns have met with considerable opposition from the Western powers and resulted in the withdrawal of United States, and subsequently of U.K., from the Organisation.

(d) The objectives of the NIIO have been stated as follows : "To move forward from a uni-directional to a multi-directional structure; from an ethnocentric to a culturally pluralistic and multi-dimensional perspective; from the receiver's passivity to an active participation; from the preponderant transnational influence to a multi-nation balance; all of it on the basis of structures that permit true access and generalised social participation in the communication process." [Somavia, 1977]

(e) Free flow of information is valuable if it is balanced. Developing a free exchange zone of information is excellent if the exchange is actually existing. But the risks are potentially high. First, there is the danger of the telecommunication breakdown. Second, data protection is not guaranteed. There is the risk of cultural alienation; any country which accepts to be only a user and not to bring down its stone to the exchange of information would be progressively losing its culture.

#### D. Information Society : The Ultimate Goal

*Proposition 4 : A knowledge-intensive, knowledge-generating and a knowledge-based information society is the desired goal of every society.*

(a) Society has always been an information society; it has always been dependent on information. However, for thousands of years, society's dependence on information was not apparent, because the quantity of information was small enough that it could be remembered and passed on by word of mouth.

(b) Today's information society is different. "It is a growing, high technology, materially affluent service society in which information rather than raw materials or energy is the dominant technology". [Bell, 1973] This society emphasizes 'few to many, poor to rich, primitive to technological, rural to urban, sacred to secular, royal to administrative, parochial to global, spears to nuclear'.

(c) An information society is one that :

(i) "enables most of its members to engage in productive pursuits that are knowledge-intensive, knowledge-generating, and knowledge-based;

(ii) "has a communication network that freely circulates information about its basic societal invariants so that this information is consistently, effectively and efficiently acted upon in the making of choices;

(iii) "manages inevitable conflict between conservative pressures to preserve these invariants and pressures for adaptive change by reason, knowledge-based understanding, and enlightened creative wisdom blended with human values, rather than traditional resort to base emotions and brute force alone." [Kochan, 1984]

(d) In the information society of the future, new social organs may be evolving that serve communities the way brains serve individuals. A community brain may supplant an individual's brain by exhibiting functions at levels that are of an order of magnitude above those of an individual's comprehension or inventiveness. Cooperative modes of political, economic and social interaction may be the hallmarks of mature information society of tomorrow.

(e) The changes that may occur during the process of change from pre- or post-industrial society to information society may be in the following areas :

- (i) Welfare, safety and health;
- (ii) Wealth and economic security;
- (iii) Belongingness to society;
- (iv) Informedness;
- (v) Skill and power;
- (vi) Rectitude, morality and ethics; and
- (vii) Deference or prestige.

#### E. The Catalytic Role of Information Professionals & Organisations

*Proposition 5 : In the attainment of a New International Information Order and transformation of pre-industrial society to an information society, the role of information*

organisations and professionals cannot be underrated.

(a) To be purposeful and effective, the information needs to be ordered into coherent systems of ideas. Information in bits, or 'instant information' as it is called, provided by the mass media, including the press, radio and TV, films, etc. is liable to be succeeded by instant oblivion. This type of information is not capable of being converted into objective knowledge, so essential for the decision-makers to arrive at coherent and consistent conclusions. Objective knowledge results from logical contents of theories and from dispassionate debates and discussions, contained in books, journals and other forms of documents. The libraries being the depositories of such documents are the repositories of objective knowledge.

(b) Transcending the limitations of time and space, the library makes available to the society the wisdom of ages, experience of today and hope of future. It acts positively in preserving human values which have, despite man's inhumanity to man, survived over the past centuries. The librarian (or for that matter every information professional in an information organisation) provides an opportunity for intellectual and social development to every individual in the society besides his concern about knowledge and care of the book, its physical form as well as its intellectual content.

(c) Among the myriad of institutions established by the society, perhaps none enjoys such an unfettered mandate to enforce peace as a library. The tensions and discrepancies that build up and cause dramatic changes in the world get reflected in the literature received in a library. The library affords its community an opportunity to reflect on the consequences of such changes and modify its approach to them accordingly. The case for a contribution from professional librarianship rests on a wider range of skills than mere 'acquisition' and 'processing' of information; it rests on its ability to disseminate the same in an effective way.

(d) If librarians and other information professionals have to become harbingers of social change, they will have to master the role of the intermediary, and learn to interpret the mass of information. The objective would be three-fold : to explain what people are entitled to; to refer elsewhere as necessary; and to be supportive. To be able to respond to demands of this type requires a range of skills not immediately associated with librarians and information scientists. However, this is not to say that they should abandon the field. They may not have

all the answers, but they possess a range of skills that ought to make them a substantial provider. For the information profession to stand aside on grounds of professional neutrality or for similar spurious reasons may be indefensible.

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# LIBRARY AND LEARNING

Sewa Singh\*

## Learning Defined

There is no one accepted definition of the term "Learning". However, in the *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, edited by H.J. Eysenck (1972), it is stated that:

"Learning consists of relatively persistent changes in possible behaviour in so far as they derive from experience."

In the *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, edited by Harold E. Mitzel and others (5th edition, 1982), it is defined thus:

"Learning is the relatively permanent change in a person's knowledge or behaviour due to experience."

This definition has three components: (1) the duration of the change is long-term rather than short-term; (2) the locus of the change is the content and structure of knowledge in memory or the behaviour of the learner; (3) the cause of the change is the learner's experience in the environment rather than fatigue, motivation, etc. Experience here indicates reinforced practice. Learning therefore is modification of behaviour as a result of previous performance; it is the outcome of all behaviour and experience. These changes in behaviour are called learning. Learning refers to the acquisition of knowledge and information, but it is not confined to it.

## Learning Process

The process of learning so pervades our lives that it sometimes seems that learning is just a synonym for living. It is important in this regard that learning extends far beyond the context of classroom. It produces habits and skills, contributes to the development of attitudes, prejudices, emotions, motives, etc. Everything we learn represents an improvement in behaviour. When we say that curriculum is a process rather than a product, this places emphasis on the ways people think and learn and moves away from the notion of acquisition of knowledge and information.

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## Library and Learning

The role of library in learning and learning process has been quite significant. It is remarked that "If librarians are to prove relevance to the curriculum they must look at how students learn and how the library can contribute to that process".

At a basic level it is theorised that the meaningfulness of learning depends "on the extent to which new information can be successfully linked to the learner's existing knowledge stored in memory". There is therefore need for a cooperative approach in which a team of people including students, teachers, librarians, etc. have to play vital roles.

The role of library and library-centred learning has been increasing in recent years in view of its relevance and use which allows closer integration of library and teaching. This poses new challenges for library in which librarian has to join resource-based learning process.

## Concept of Library College

In the context of role of library in teaching learning process, the concept of 'library college' was put forward by Louis Shores as far back as 1934. It was followed by the work of Patricia Knapp and her famous Montith Project with the underlying principle "to increase the effectiveness of student learning, particularly through the use of library centres, independent study with a bibliographically expert faculty". The whole concept of 'library college' revolves round independent study within the precincts of the library, making the classroom teaching insignificant. It involves the complete fusion of learner and the resources in which the student, the range of resources, the bibliographic expert, and the subject specialist are all located in the library.

It may, however, be pointed out that the concept of 'library college' is still to find a complete implementation even in the country of its origin; much less in India where it has yet to be floated.

## Concept of User Education

User education is another process in the increasing role of library and diversity of its services in the learning process. According to Herring "User education has four aims; to enhance student learn-

ing, to encourage user independence, to widen the use of a range of library resources and to introduce the library and its staff to its users".

User education implies user awareness, library orientation, course related bibliographic instruction and interest profiling. User awareness is all pervasive and primordial; library orientation is to introduce the library to all the newly admitted students; bibliographic instruction aims at the objective of facilitating course work; while interest profiling is to feed the research scholars and the faculty with the relevant latest literature by matching their interests with library resources.

### Methods of User Education

#### *The Library Tour*

It has been experienced that "the traditional library tour conveys so many facts that most are forgotten in a short time" by the students. There is another facet of such a tour. By the time the exercise has been repeated a few times in the day by the same guide it probably begins to lose its sense of reality, and a feeling of boredom may be carried by the students. What is therefore required is the new approaches afforded by the advent of new technology. These range from tape/slide presentations to computer-aided instruction and interactive video. Some special libraries and information centres in India also are trying these methods and participating actively in the student learning process.

#### *Printed Media*

The above methods must be supplemented by the printed media supplied to the learners in the form of handouts, programmed instruction, programmed kits, self-instruction brochures, library guides, etc.

### Information Technology and User Education

As the library is turning into a multi-media resource centre, it is necessary to give instruction and guidance in the use of the IT hardware. The learners need to be guided about the automated bibliographical/information sources which are available in the form of databanks.

Similarly, in the library of the future, software packages, both commercially produced and in-house varieties, will be available. User education programmes must feature the computer-aided learning so as to make them accessible like printed resources.

### Reference and Information Services

By providing a variety of reference and information services a library can enhance the utility of its resources, and thereby increase the potentialities of the society and help make it a learned society of tomorrow. The library staff can use its professionalism in increasing the library skills so that the learners can develop their learning abilities. The library staff can not only provide short-term and long-term reference services but also venture into providing the current awareness services, selective dissemination of information, among others. Through these services librarian can contribute to the enhancement of the creative potential of the society.

### Public Relations Work

It is necessary in the modern days to extend the learning base of a library. One of the effective methods is to make the public relations work effective by outreaching to the society. Here the library can successfully make use of the audio-visual media, attract the people, and communicate the message of the learning resource centre.

### Marketing Strategies

For the library to be a true centre of learning, it is essential to adopt strategies for marketing its information products and services. This may better be linked with the needs of the users so that their expectations could be fulfilled and for some of them atleast the potential is identified.

### Learning Resources

In order to make the library a learning centre, it is important to ensure the most efficient use of resources. The entire gamut of materials in all formats, acquired in the library, its librarian, its staff, its equipments (including computer, photocopier, micro-film camera/reader, and the like), all are learning resources. These must be well organised so as to facilitate the objectives and enhance the role of the library in the learning process.

### Learning Environment

The learning environment has to be conducive to the purpose of learning. It should be :

- welcoming to the learner;
- responsive to the needs of the learner;
- professionally efficient;
- adaptive to the different learning styles of different people;



- capable of adaption and development to keep abreast of advances in new technologies.

On the other side, in academic institutions, the management and educators must recognise the importance of the close relationship between the educational curriculum and the library resources supporting it. This highlights the 'learning process' in terms of content, and accordingly the need for organisation and use of learning resources. This signifies the new strategies for learning including new technology which has enabled the library to provide information immediately keeping into view the realities of the learners. This type of learning-resource organisation can lead to better course design, better management of information and learning resources for tomorrow.

The increasing application of new technology may lead to increasing complex interaction of the different components of learning resources and services. It may bring together in the library such components as educational technology, audio-visual services, computing process etc. And, these may emerge tomorrow as independent centres, automated and electronic information services, self-learning materials, and self-learning materials pro-

duction centres, hardware and software centres, multi-media materials, and so on. All these facilities should be coordinated to a greater extent with other learning resource agencies in the society.

### Future

The future is likely to offer greater opportunities to library. With courage, ability, and professional skills, there is likely to be a shift of emphasis from service provision based on a collection of materials to transforming into an access point for providing information. The library may in this way contribute to the enhancement of creative potential of the society and lead it to the goal of becoming a 'learned society'.

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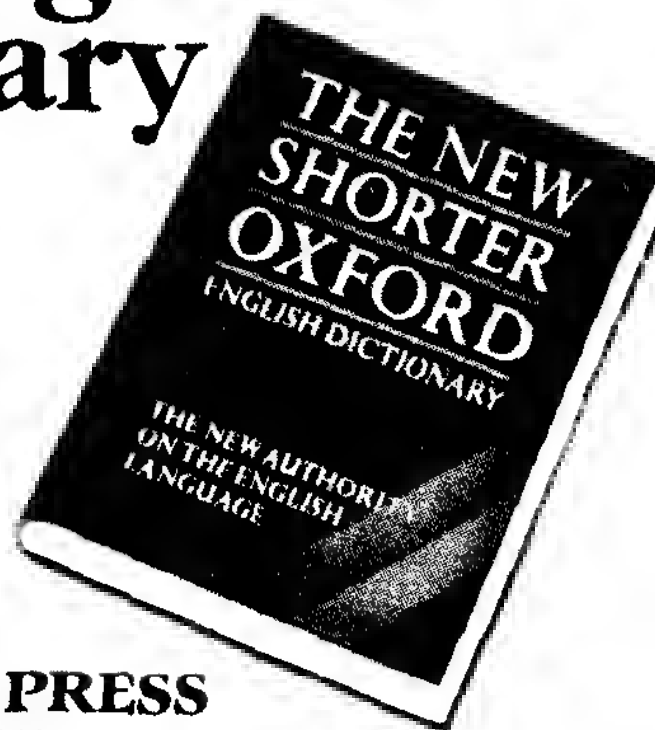
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## Facts and figures

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# Books in the Information Age

Viswanathan T.\*

Before I discuss the topic "Books in the Information Age", let me present a brief perspective of the current status of the field of information. All of us know that we are passing through the information age and information is important these days. The buzz phrases like 'Information is Power' and 'Information is the key to success' have become a reality. In fact, in the context of economic liberalisation and globalisation of markets, information has assumed even more importance. It is now clear that in order to stay competitive a company or for that matter even a scientist needs to gather, process and assimilate relevant information within a short time. This market demand for information is pushing up the price of information day by day. And, information has come to stay as a commodity with high inflationary trends.

## Electronic Publishing

In order to contain the inflationary trends and make available information at an affordable price, more and more publishers are turning to publishing in electronic form. Electronic information as a tradable commodity is increasingly being accepted by the society. The growth rate in this field is so large that the electronic media market may soon outstrip print-on-paper market. Major traditional publishing houses are now seriously looking into the possibility of the electronic publication in order to stay in business. They are no longer confined to the book business but they are slowly growing into publishers of information in any form that makes good commercial sense. It is, in this context, that one needs to look at the relevance of books in the information age.

At the heart of electronic publishing is a CD-ROM, Compact Disk — Read Only Memory. The CD technology was first designed for audio introduced by Philips in 1982. CD is basically a digital medium. Hence, information stored on CDs can be manipulated, processed and displayed by computer systems. A CD-ROM can hold as much as

300,000-600,000 A4 size pages of text or 20,000 pages of scanned image. This is equivalent to 75 books of 300 pages each. Since the CD-ROM data can be manipulated by computers, huge databases can be stored on CD-ROMs and searched in a few seconds. Now publishers are turning to CD-ROM as a medium of publication purely for economical reasons.

## Books in CD-ROM

Publishing in CD-ROMs brings up many interesting issues. As mentioned earlier, one CD-ROM can hold up to 75 books on an average. How many publishers bring out 75 books at a time so that they can put all of them in one CD-ROM? Or, will the publishers wait to gather full CD-ROM worth material before they bring out a CD-ROM. This implies unnecessary delay for those publications which got ready early. An answer to this may be in forming publishers' consortia. An example of this is the ADONIS consortium of about 10 publishers which brings out about 500 full text journals on CD-ROM. One CD-ROM comes out every week containing good amount of information in it. Many CD-ROMs have come out containing book publications. As an example, one of the commercially available CD-ROMs contains Bhagawad Gita, Koran and Bible along with about 60 novels. Thus electronic publishing is the necessary ploy for consortium approach so that books of different publishers can be brought out on a single CD-ROM.

People like to read books in a variety of places. Apart from home and libraries, people like to read while travelling, at bus stops and in places where they are waiting for something or the other. Will CD-ROM publishing permit this? Battery operated pocket CD-ROM drives have started appearing in the market which should enable persons to read books wherever they like. A positive aspect of this is that a person can carry with ease a whole library of 50-75 books in his pocket, a luxury that is not available with paper versions. It is, however, not clear how user-friendly these devices are and how the reader population adapt itself to reading from small computer screens that are hand-held.

From the users' point of view CD-ROM publishing poses different types of problems. Out of say

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75 books in a CD-ROM, a reader may be interested only in a few books. Yet he is forced to buy the entire set of books in a CD-ROM and pay for all the books. How can this problem be solved? If the CD-Rom is custom made, this problem can be alleviated. A reader or a library chooses a set of required books which are then placed on CD-ROM and delivered to the user. Thus the user would pay only for the CD-ROM disk and the books selected by him. But as of now this choice does not exist. The issue is somewhat like the service in a canteen or a hotel. Two systems of service, viz. *a la carte* or *thali meals* exist. In the former, the user chooses what he wants from a list of assorted items which are generally more expensive compared to items in the *Thali* meal. The standard (*Thali*) meal contains fixed items. A user orders for the full *Thali* and takes what he likes and discards the rest. This is a cheaper option. CD-ROM publishing is today like the *Thali meals*.

### Relevance of Books

The world is witnessing an explosion in the

field of information. There is an increasing tendency to lay hands on primary information at the earliest. For example, researchers exchange on computer networks pre print copies of articles written by them much before the journal becomes available in the electronic or print form. There is a rush to share information. Most often, these pre prints can be converted into searchable databases with the result need may never arise to consult books which generally carry secondary information taken from primary publications. This situation is applicable for both natural and social sciences including economics and commerce. One may actually see a decline in demand for books in the future in these areas. However, novels and fictions will continue to have their own market whether they are published in paper form or electronic form.

In conclusion, it is clear that electronic publishing will become predominant in the coming years. In future books which are based on thoughts and ideas published in journals may not find much market. The future of book publishing seems to lie in fiction and novels.



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Fisheries Sciences	1	4	17	42
Basic Sciences	—	3	15	31



# UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING

Amrik Singh\*

If hardly any Indian university has a professionally organised publishing programme, this should not come as a surprise to anyone. Universities in India have been in a state of decay for over a quarter century, if not longer. To expect the universities to have a publishing programme in today's situation would amount to asking somebody (who is ill) why he is unable to jump. It is as simple as that.

Evidently it is not possible to go into the question why our university system is in decay and why none of the universities is able to undertake a publishing programme. The issue is much too large and complex to be taken up here. It may not be difficult however to recall something which happened at the end of the 70's when G. Parthasarathy was the Vice Chancellor of the JNU.

The occasion was a reception held in honour of the head of the Oxford University Press (OUP) who was visiting India at that time. The first 500 years of the OUP were being celebrated in that year and the visit to India was in that connection. At a reception held in his honour, the Vice Chancellor of JNU expressed the intention that his university might undertake such a venture. As anyone can see, JNU would have been an appropriate sponsoring agency for the purpose.

But that did not come to pass. JNU started sliding downhill. The problems were taken care of to some extent in 1983. Since then, things have been certainly better than before but all that one can say about the JNU is that the university has been able to keep its head above water, and little more than that.

If this is what has been happening to the JNU, one of the premier universities of the country, and more or less primarily concerned with postgraduate study and research, to talk of other universities would not help in any meaningful way. Before coming to the issue in hand, a couple of things which have a bearing on the decline of our universities may at least be referred to, if not dilated upon.

## II

One, something like 50 percent of them are weighed down by the crush of numbers. Each one

of them has to handle a large number of undergraduates. As per the existing count, undergraduates number more than four million. To deal with such large numbers requires managerial ability of a kind which is not available to most of them. JNU was not bothered by this problem and could have shaped into some kind of a model university. But then, for reasons into which it is not possible to go into, this did not come to pass.

This brings us to the second factor in the situation. Each single university suffers from the stench of middle class morality. In specific terms, this is what it means; the middle class is proliferating and more and more people are getting qualified for jobs which are not growing in the same proportion. Even as it is, the country is spending much more on higher education than it ought to be doing. This is being done largely at the cost of elementary education which in turn means that the pressure from below is unremitting.

This has led, amongst other things, to the crisis of ungovernability from which the country has suffered for a couple of decades. For their part, the universities too contribute to this crisis in many ways and there is no way, at least in the short run, in which one can see a way out of this impasse.

One outcome of this competition for jobs is that there are intrigues against one another and manipulation is the order of the day. Intrigues take place all over the world, in every country and in every system. But they do not have the same deadly edge as they seem to have in our country. There are too few jobs and too many people chasing them. In consequence, the atmosphere within the university departments and colleges stinks and has become unhealthy in the extreme.

This in turn leads to two negative consequences. One, even those who make it to the top are no longer creative. The sheer effort of making it to the coveted place makes them sterile and unfit for doing anything useful other than routine work. Exceptions are always there and they are numerous enough to keep the system going. But the system is unable to accomplish much and the results are there for everybody to see.

The second outcome of this state of affairs is that all this adds to the pressures which culminate in the process called the brain drain. Most talented

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\*Former Secretary, Association of Indian Universities, New Delhi.

people either choose to go abroad or are pushed out, in a manner of speaking. It is known for instance that the Nobel Prize winner, Khurana, when he came back after a stint abroad, wanted to settle down here but could not do so. There are hundreds and thousands of similar cases. What this leads to in the ultimate analysis is the emasculation (why not say, devitalisation) of the Indian university system.

The third factor in this situation is the unpardonable degree of politicisation to which universities are being constantly subjected. The impulse comes from those who are involved in politics. Gradually it extends itself to issues like where universities are to be located, how colleges are affiliated, what kind of vice chancellors are appointed, what other nominations are made to different university bodies and so on. All this lead to further and irremediable politicisation. Once the wrong kind of people begin to wield power in the universities, whatever little of academic or moral integrity is left in the system is snuffed out.

To dilate on this issue any further would be neither relevant nor helpful.

### III

The issue under discussion is university publishing. Four things may be said in this regard. One, university publishing can be run only on business lines and not like a public sector outfit. Unless that can be ensured, universities would lose money and would keep on losing money. Funds being scarce in any case, this cannot be a working proposition in the existing situation.

Except for a few odd universities, and that also not consistently but by fits and starts, hardly any university is able to regulate its financial affairs in the manner it ought to be done. It is only rarely that there is a combination of a hard-headed vice chancellor and a competent finance officer and the two of them, working together, can manage to keep the university solvent.

Funding too is usually uncertain and unreliable and that makes things doubly difficult. If a university publishing house in the proper sense of the word is to be established, it would have to be ensured that it has, first of all, a basic corpus and, secondly, a set of rules and regulations which are appropriate to a business house rather than a government department and so on. Without these twin requirements being amply and fully met, it would not be possible even to think of setting up a publishing unit.

The second requirement is that the management should be totally professional in character. Except for a couple of publishing houses, hardly any one of them is professionally managed. A university publishing house is, therefore, something that is still distant and would perhaps have to wait for a few years.

The third requirement would be that there is a regular flow of competently written manuscripts which can be adjudged as suitable for publication. The loss of talent to other countries is a factor in the situation. What we are doing, to put no more gloss on it, is to train a large number of talented people at a cost which is much lower than would have to be spent in a developed country. The more talented they are, the less they are wanted in India. Since others want them and can pay for them, there is no reason why, from their point of view, they should refuse to migrate abroad. And most of them do.

Those that are left behind are not even the second best. Quite a few of them belong to the category of the third best or the fourth best and even lower than that. Such people cannot be creative. It is not too much to say that lack of suitable manuscripts for purposes of publication can prove a bottleneck.

Yet this does not mean that one or two universities cannot enter this business and perform well. They can do this even now provided they are well organised from within and undertake to do the job on a professional basis. Only nobody with initiative and commitment has so far taken the plunge and this is why we are without even a couple of good university presses.

As a matter of fact, there are ample business opportunities available even today. If somebody has business sense and enterprise, there is the whole world of textbook publishing waiting to be exploited. In other words, the potentiality is there but the men and women of the required calibre and energy are not available to take advantage of it.

Does this sound too negative? Perhaps. If it does, it has at least the merit of being realistic. One thing should be understood clearly. University publishing is an optional activity in today's situation when we are underperforming badly. Once universities get out of their existing state of decay and begin to perform well, having their own publishing presses would become almost a necessity. Growth of scholarship and scientific research goes hand in hand with university publishing. Hopefully, a day would come when we would be able to uncage what is in us. But when?

# Some Reflections on the Books for Higher Education

Anand Sarup\*

It is generally acknowledged that books play an important role in higher education. However, what really happens in the process of acquiring higher education determines what role books will play and what kind of books will be produced, prescribed and studied.

The biggest confusion arises from what is denoted by the term 'higher education'. In common parlance, 'higher education' comprises education imparted after the completion of higher secondary education. However, this definition does not indicate as to whether there are any objectives or processes specifically germane to higher education without which an educational activity would not qualify as 'higher education'.

Actually, the problem starts not with higher education but with the very beginning of institutionalised education. In India, in most schools, emphasis is placed not on learning but on teaching. Educational transactions are carried on with the assumption that the main task of the school and the teachers is to fill the empty mind of a child with useful and predetermined information and notions. In such situations, the initiative lies entirely in the hands of teachers; the pupils are no more than passive recipients.

Despite all the researches on education, and emphasis to the contrary in bold policy statements, except in rare institutions, education has continued to be provided as a one way process in which the teachers rather than the students determine what will be learnt, in what quantum and sequence, in respect of which subjects. All this is not only facilitated but it is even dictated by the nature of requirements for getting into institutions of higher education and more particularly, by the examination system. The result of this kind of education is the choking of initiative and the blunting of the chil-

dren's sharp edge of curiosity and creating in them an attitude of dependence on the teacher for seeking and internalising information and ideas.

Unfortunately, even the so called higher education imparted in most colleges and universities continues to be a one way transaction. The curriculum, the syllabus and, once again, the system of examinations, encourages the teachers to act as mentors who decide what is good or relevant for the student and who know the correct answers. Most teachers spend their time in the classrooms dictating notes; only the odd ones think of taking the students on an adventure into the boundless world of learning. Almost all the researchers who have investigated the performance of teachers have found that, for various reasons, most of the teachers even of post-graduate classes, read very minimally on their initiative. Given this state of affairs, it is no surprise that the teachers tune themselves to the litany of examinations, doling out relevant 'knowledge' to their pupils, along with an assurance of success in the examinations.

In the scenario described above, there is hardly any place for books which challenge the intellect, fire the imagination and fill the mind with a sense of adventure. Now a days, in every area, the frontiers of knowledge are constantly being extended. Lately, because of a qualitative improvement in information technology and the tools for research, well established beliefs are being exploded with breathtaking frequency. For hundreds of years, scientists and philosophers have been raising doubts about the doctrine of absolute certainty and advocating the desirability of attributing provisionality to all theories, conclusions, principles and beliefs. In spite of this, the Indian teachers and the Indian textbooks are characterised by a finality of neatly packaged knowledge which precludes any arguing or questioning.

To a great extent, this is because of the examination system. It has progressively less and less of open-ended questions and more and more of either-

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\*Hony. Editor, *Journal of Higher Education*,  
University Grants Commission, New Delhi-110002.

or questions. Hence the predominance of guide books and textbooks structured to help the student in giving a particular answer to a particular question. Once a student has these books, he has no need to think and comprehend. He can manage with memorizing the answers. These are now the ballast on which the preponderant majority of students in higher education sail across the turbulent sea of examinations.

One cannot blame the Indian publishers. They are in publishing because that is how they have chosen to earn money. Some of them do publish books which provide a reasonable opportunity for thinking and comprehending but most books of this kind are either for an unusual course or the Indian edition of a foreign publication. Given the research situation in India where the quantity rather than quality pays dividends and only a microscopic minority is working on the frontiers of knowledge, well established teachers go in for writing do-it-quick type of textbooks rather than writing books which would provide multi-dimensional insights and perhaps, confuse the average student with inescapable question-marks and uncertainties.

One can reasonably question the role of textbooks in higher education, if, by higher education one means a process by which a student learns to discriminately assimilate information and ideas and acquires knowledge, skills and a perspective with reference to life in general and also in relation to his chosen fields of study. How can textbooks which, of necessity, present ideas and information in predetermined formats and dosages, help a student to learn to discriminate and develop a perspective? Perhaps, there can be textbooks which might provide quick means to update the information base of students but these cannot and should not be allowed to become the mainstay of the teaching-learning process in higher education.

Besides the examination system, which has to take most of the blame for the unsatisfactory state of affairs in respect of books for higher education, one must hold the University Grants Commission, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research & Education, the All India Council of Technical Education also accountable. While these bodies have some schemes for promoting the publication of textbooks, they play no role either in defining the characteristics of books for higher education or conduct-

ing a survey (and publishing the results thereof) of books published for higher education. Nearly two years back, when the National Book Trust and the University Grants Commission entered into an agreement to work together for the encouragement of high quality textbooks for higher education, it was decided that a high powered National Committee would annually publish a review of the books published by Indian publishers for higher education, pinpointing the areas of neglect and laying down guidelines for the promotion of book publishing in the coming year. If this kind of review had been conducted and its results published, the country would have had an objective assessment and the publishers too would have had a mandate to work on.

As of now, with honourable exceptions, the publishing of books (textbooks really) for higher education is characterised by the churning out of 'quickies', badly printed on cheap paper, prepared by compilers masquerading as authors, gathering material from foreign textbooks or other indigenous textbooks of questionable quality.

While things are bad enough in respect of English language books, the scene is very dismal indeed for regional languages. Here the problem is compounded partly by the inability of frontline thinkers, most of whom were educated through the medium of English, to write in the regional languages and partly by lack of encouragement to translators. Maybe, this is also because the effective demand for books in regional languages is just not there. Perhaps, English despite ineffectual chauvinism for regional languages, continues to be the language of higher education in India. Had it been otherwise, the publication of books in regional languages would have picked up. There is no reason to believe that languages other than English cannot be the vehicles of knowledge. In other countries, other languages are being used as media for publication as well as instruction and for this, about everything worthwhile is being translated. In China and South-East Asia and in erstwhile Soviet Union, every book relevant for higher education or for general reading gets translated in the language of the country/region within a few months of its publication in English/French/German, etc.

To sum up, if books for higher education are to improve, the answer lies basically in looking at the examination system and the process and culture of



higher education. As long as these two variables remain the same, it would be almost impossible to bring about a significant change in the existing situation.

As far as regional languages are concerned, one rather drastic and, in the short run, cataclysmic solution would be to lay down that everyone who wishes to take an examination and get a degree from a university in a particular state will be taught and examined only in the language of the state. As long as the recourse to studying and teaching in English is available, regional languages will not become the medium of higher education. Another step which will have to be taken by all states will be to set up well-heelled translation bureaus which will, *inter-alia*, reward publishers bringing out translations of the latest books and journals in regional languages.

In addition to the above measures for creating

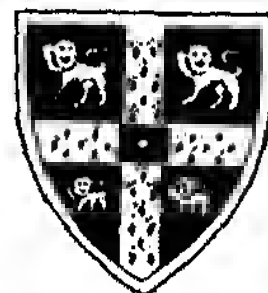
an effective demand and also a supply line for books in regional languages, it is also essential that all the national agencies concerned with the curricula and quality of higher education should address themselves to the taxonomical issue of what kind of book (if such a categorization has to be made) may reasonably be described as a book for higher education. A mere categorization will, however, not be enough. Periodically, there will have to be a critical review by an independent body of persons of standing to make a general, subject, and level-wise assessment of the prevailing situation.

Many people are arguing that, in the matter of promotions, a good teacher should be given the same status as a good researcher. Maybe, in this kind of reckoning, a person who has written an outstanding book for higher education should, in addition to reaping the financial rewards from publishing, also receive special consideration for appointment to higher posts in academia.



## THE OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE SOCIETY OF INDIA

### SCHOLARSHIPS 1994



The Oxford and Cambridge Society of India invites applications for scholarships being awarded for study at the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge beginning from October 1994. Applicants must hold at least a first class Honours degree or its equivalent from a recognised Indian University. This should be their first opportunity to study abroad. They should have obtained admission to one of the colleges of Oxford or Cambridge, to pursue a course of study leading to the degrees of B.A. (with senior status at Oxford, or affiliated status at Cambridge), M.Sc./M.Lit/M.Phil/B.Phil or D.Phil/Ph.D. The scholarship amount, worth Rs. 10,000/- each will be paid into the scholar-elect's bank account in India once he or she has joined Oxford or Cambridge.

Each candidate will be asked to submit alongwith the application form the following material :

1. Attested copies of degrees obtained.
2. Certificate of age.
3. Medical Certificate.
4. Two passport size photographs.
5. An essay in 400-600 words (preferably typed) indicating the candidates academic and extra curricular interests and achievements, and the reasons for pursuing a course of study at Oxford or Cambridge.
6. Copy of letter of admission to a college in Oxford or Cambridge.

The scholarship will be awarded on the basis of a candidate's attainments, potential for excellence and the relevance of the course of studies chosen to later life. Candidates shortlisted will be invited for interviews to be held in Delhi in May 1994.

Application forms may be obtained by sending a self-addressed Re. 1/- stamped envelope (9 ins x 4 ins) to the Hony. President, Oxford and Cambridge Society of India, 35-A, Friends Colony (East), New Delhi-110 065. The last date for receiving completed Application Form is 3rd May, 1994.

# OUTSTANDING PUBLICATIONS OF GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

## PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE

Sr.	Name of the book with its author	Price Rs.
1	Aftermath of War — Parmeshwari Dayal	90-00
2	Change without Violence - Gandhian Theory of Social Change — Prof. T.K.N. Unnithan	25-00
3	Intimation of Peaceful Society — Devavrat N. Pathak	9-00
4	Non-violence in Medical Science — Larry Dossy	40-00
5	Perspectives of Peace Research —	10-00
6	Philosophical Assumption for Training in Non-violence — Prof. Sujata Dasgupta	15-00
7	Pilgrimage to Non-Violence — Lanza del Vasto	6-00
8	Social Virtues in Gandhian Concept of Ahimsa — R. R. Diwakar	2-50
9	Struggle for Peace — Prof. Johan Galtung	25-00
10	The Way is the Goal - Gandhi today — Prof. Johan Galtung	150-00

## SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

11	Modernity and Science — Shri J. Veera Raghavan	10-00
12	Science & Society — Prof. K.L. Chopra	10-00
13	Science & Spirituality — Kirit Joshi	25-00
14	Science & Technology for Rural Society — R.D. Adatia	7-00
15	Science, Ethics and Society — Prof. Sudhir P. Pandya	22-00
16	Science, Non-Violence and Education — Prof. L.S. Kothari	25-00
17	Uniting Eastern Philosophy and Modern Science — Brian Josephson & Michael Conrad	10-00

## EDUCATION

18	Population Education: An Approach to Formulation of Curricula — Ed. Prof Ramlal Parikh	20-00
19	Population to the context of India's Development — Prof. P.B. Desai	90-00
20	Value Education: Beyond Borders — Prof. Jaap Schouten	100-00
21	Human Values Through Education — Prof. T.K.N. Unnithan	140-00
22	Human Rights — R.K. Trivedi	15-00

## LINGUISTICS

23	Halari Dialect — Dr. Shantibhai Acharya	125-00
24	Language Change and Modernization — Joseph E. Di Bona	7-00

## HISTORY

25	New Perspectives in History — Ramlal Parikh and Rasesh Jamindar	180-00
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## TRIBAL RESEARCH

26	Dependence of Tribals on Forests — Dr. D.N. Tiwari	150-00
27	From Farm to Factory — R.B. Lal	35-00
28	Mogra Dev : Tribal Crocodile Gods — E. Fischer & Haka Shah	15-00
29	Vetra Ne Khambha - Memorial for Dead — E. Fischer and Haka Shah	15-00

## SOCIOLOGY

30	Gandhian Approach to Social Work — Parmeshwari Dayal	60-00
31	Foreign Aid and Indian Development — K.C. Roy	115-00

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Navajivan Trust, Post Navajivan, Ahmedabad - 380014

# Books for Higher Education

Anand P. Srivastava\*

## Academic Climate

An academic environment in a society is the most proud feature of modern times. 'Education for All' as a movement acquired momentum and speed in the 18th Century Europe. Living rooms started becoming a museum and a library. The kitchen also became a laboratory. Roger Bacon described this phenomenon in the following paragraph :

'Now among all benefits that could be conferred upon mankind I found none so great as the discovery of new arts, endowments and commodities for the bettering of man's life. For I saw that among the crude people in primitive homes that authors of inventions and discoveries were consecrated and numbered among the gods...'

The movement of modern secular education started in India during the early 19th century and around 1800 A.D. some colleges started functioning. About 200 years have passed. Now we have over 200 universities, 7000 colleges and about 3000 research institutions. But the state of sound academic environment in the country is far from being satisfactory. Two centuries of higher education, fairly large number of institutions and lakhs of teachers; all are indicative of quantity no doubt, but quality is conspicuous by its absence.

For developing a sound and comprehensive collection of knowledge — old and new — for use by the living ones and the posterity there are just three possible ways :

- 1) Academics of the country produce standard works,
- 2) Simultaneous publication of standard works in India for Indian market, and
- 3) Standard works from abroad are systematically acquired.

## Book Production by Academics

The real academic climate in a country is generated when a common academic conducts rigorous inquiry (which is properly assimilated) synthetic in

character, and continues intellectual work for life. This common academic teaches effectively the younger generation, continues himself to learn through research and objective thinking, and ultimately fruits of his or her efforts are produced as academic works. These academic works are called books. Right from 1800 A.D. the Indian teacher did not earnestly take to book production as one of the major responsibilities of an academic. It was always a practice to import all needed books written by English authors for use in Indian colleges and universities. Even independent India has textbooks programme, duly stamped by Government of India, for acquiring British, American and Russian books for use in our colleges and universities. Scores of top level experts as professors in universities and renowned institutes have not produced quality books for use by their students. No evidence exists to show that our academics ever took to book-writing as a part of duties of the academic community. We left the gaps to be filled by other professions. Perhaps, grocers could be one. It can be seen through a simple study that an academic abroad, even after becoming a professor, writes a number of books for use by students. With us the position is that only one out of a thousand compiles a useful book after becoming a professor. Most of them publish stereotyped papers in collaboration with research students and generally visit abroad under one scheme or the other. Book writing is seldom done by an Indian academic.

## Simultaneous Publishing

Under the first way our performance has been very poor. As far as the second way is concerned, we did see that most of the books simultaneously got published from English language world, viz. New York, London, Sydney and Canberra. But Bombay or Calcutta or Delhi did not get included in such collaborations. The main reason for absence of India in simultaneous publishing has been the lack of trust of foreign publishers in Indian publishing houses and the book trade in India. Therefore, for sustaining higher education in India only the third way of professional collection building has been left.

## Standard Collection Building

The overall value of a library depends totally on

\*University Librarian, Delhi University, Delhi - 110007

the quality and quantity of books and other documents which may be available in that library. Our country is located thousands of miles away from the bakeries which are producing new knowledge. We all know that no organised professional mechanism exists to see that new knowledge produced abroad is acquired even at selected regional places in the country. The result is that most of good books do not touch the Indian soil. Books that generally come to India are governed by criteria of high margin and profit. These are not the ways through which representative, and yet comprehensive, professional collection building work is being presently done by librarians abroad. Collection building is one of the major roles of American and European librarianship. Indian librarianship shall have to develop a sound mechanism for acquiring knowledge output from abroad. The question is on what lines we should develop a sound acquisition mechanism? The answer may be found in the details of the Library of Congress acquisition programme from India and other countries, for libraries in U.S.A., or the Canadian Acquisition Programme of Indian Books through Indo-Canadian Shastri Institute. Can the Indian universities and CSIR units jointly launch book acquisition programme in USA and/or UK for selected Indian libraries? How can this be organised? How can the Indian Library Association awaken the University Grants Commission, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, and other bodies for launching such an essential programme under the umbrella of say, the Indian Library Association or Federation of Indian Publishers and Book sellers. For its very success such a project must not work under the Government. The range of business shall not be less than Rs. 2,000 crores per year. A net profit of the minimum 10% shall give gain of Rs. 200 crores per year to the Association or the Federation. If reduced to the minimum it shall be Rupees one crore a year. The most important achievement shall be a sound, planned and comprehensive collection building, the soul of information age, the Indian libraries. Dynamic professional leaders shall have to examine this proposition in future for library movement in India. If Americans can do it all over the world, when their own book trade is the most developed, through the branches of the library of Congress, why can the Indian Library Association, or some other body, not do so by establishing just two units at New York and London?

### The Resultant Scenario

The great universities of the world invariably have great university libraries otherwise greatness

will not be assigned to them. For great libraries the first essential requirement is rich collections. There are numerous faults in the affairs of acquisitions in our university libraries.

While in progressive universities of the world the responsibility of acquisitions rests on the Librarian, who collaborates with specialists, in India there is not even the faintest realisation of this reality. The universities have no national and/or local acquisitions policy. Collections grow just by *happenstance*. Some books casually find their way to India through the local book trade. Booksellers take them to members of various faculties and they select some out of that lot. A brisk business activity takes place around the month of March each year. The Librarian is required just to record, and pass bills for payment. Our Vice-Chancellors and professors have never endeavoured to know as to how the acquisitions are organised in major universities of the world. They are not aware that it is impossible for any scholar to know by himself or herself as to what total materials have been published in the world on their fields, even of a narrow specialisation, during a short period of about one or two years. A research study conducted in American universities reveals that, 'Throughout the half century there was a steady shift in selection responsibility away from the university's professorial staff and to its library staff. Whereas the former selected as much as 80% of total university library acquisitions in 1930 the ratio by the end of the period was reverse of that, with librarians initiating the acquisition of four out of every five titles. This remarkable change resulted from several factors, including the increasing professionalism of librarians, the vast increase in general publishing, the growing cadre of librarians with extensive subject training and the increasing pressure of other responsibilities upon teaching faculty. Coupled with greater attention to carefully conceived and clearly articulated policies of selection in many libraries, it tended to produce collections with more balance and symmetry than had been possible earlier'.<sup>1</sup>

Our universities have not yet formulated collection development policies. The UGC has done no exercise on it. Vice-Chancellors have seldom thought of this issue and professors do not seem to be aware of this aspect. University librarians are helpless in these circumstances because they have no authority on this area to conceive and implement certain policies. The neglect of the UGC and universities, etc., becomes possible because books do no



have the same role in our universities, etc., as they have in Europe, North America and other countries. For, if they had some real value we would have developed in last forty years an efficient machinery for acquiring them for use. Our work is going on in absence of good and latest books. Let us examine an incredible case of the release of about twenty crores of rupees as grants for books by our University Grants Commission to universities and colleges on the eve of the World Book Fair around February, 1988. No thoughtful preparations were done either of an awarded selection by universities and colleges or by the magnates of Indian book trade for acquiring latest publications. The book trade is not foolish to import latest publications when grants were not sure to come and librarians were not given time or notice to select and arrive at really useful lists, but the grant was released suddenly and spent by buying less useful (if not useless) materials during a fortnight. It is said that some big distributors emptied their godowns having remainders and less useful books. It shows that the UGC does not know how difficult and time consuming it is to make proper use of book grants. Such an event is impossible to take place in Europe and North America where collections are acquired by dominating involvement of university librarians. Using large sums for books etc, requires a professional strategy if the money is to be spent properly. We forget to realise that, 'books create their own demand'. If good books are acquired the readership will be greater. In this game librarians have a leading role, 'For every librarian it is a matter of professional duty and pride to see that his library is the best that his money can buy for the present and future needs of the University...' The right and duty to acquire and collect books have so far not been granted to university librarians in India. The root cause of this neglect is a sterile educational environment where real learning is absent and the element of examinations, not only dominates, but rules all activities of teachers, students and administrators. Altbach has examined this issue in the particular context of India and describes the obstacles to international development and the worldwide spread of information. He has pleaded for interrelated system of scholars, publishers, government, librarians and booksellers.<sup>3</sup> We have not given concrete thoughts on these perspectives on the distribution of knowledge in our country.

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1967, the following which remains true even in 1994:

"The way, book selection is mostly made is another indication. Titles are just ticked off from the lists sent in by nondescript booksellers or books are selected from the lots brought on approval basis by vendors. We all know how 'busy' the teachers are. Rarely are the lists of books for purchase made out after perusal of reviews in relevant journals and literary supplements. The net result is that the book shelves in the library get cluttered up with a lot of ephemeral junk — the result of high pressure salesmanship on the part of a few British and American publishers. In short, it would be fairly correct to say that book selection for academic libraries is done neither by the librarian nor by the faculty *abinitio*, but by wholesale stockists and booksellers. The best of their bulk purchase is picked up by institutions located in big cities and the balance of the rejected stuff slowly percolates its way in educational institutions located elsewhere."<sup>4</sup>

When the channels for intake of global knowledge have not been established in the country, the professoriate is not familiar with book selection tools which are many, the librarians stand deprived to build library collections and the book trade is making largely the highest profit with least efforts, the collections of university libraries are bound to be poor and inappropriate. The following study reported by the Association of Indian Universities gives a gloomy picture of library finances:

"What is the appropriate size of the library's collections? Quantifying this: the average for libraries seems to be 1,89,188 total volumes as on May 30, 1984. The median was 56,684 volumes, with a range of 90,000—9,20,387 volumes... The library's percentage of expenditures, compared to the university's general and educational expenditures ranged from a low of 1.6 to a high of 8.6. The median was 3.6...."<sup>5</sup>

When the money is so scarce and its utilisation on books, etc., is unsystematic, unprofessional, casual and ad-hoc, it is obvious that much success is not going to be achieved in collection building in our university libraries. This anarchy has not created problems leading to an academic or bloody revolution of a threatening nature because, as Gidwani stated in 1967, the faculty and the students as a

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routine did not require books, journals etc. for their teaching learning processes. Gidwani observed :

"The causes why Indian University Libraries continue to be grounded and have so far failed to reach a take off stage in spite of the grants pumped in by the UGC are the same which underline the ineffectiveness of higher education itself. A main reason is that we have today a self satisfied faculty which inexplicably does precious little to keep itself intellectually alive, with the consequence that practically no rubbing of mature minds takes place on the campus. The teacher lacks a persistent drive for initiative, enterprise and experimentation both in his teaching content and methodology. The widespread apathy on the part of the academician will be amply established if one goes round the reading halls of a University Library. One rarely finds the faculty there. Senior teachers seem to feel that it is derogatory for them to be seen often in the library."

The collections available in various university libraries are not there as a result of any meticu-

lously drawn acquisitions policies covering curricula needs and users' demands. The modern roles of professional library and information science are not involved into it. As stated earlier, these collections have developed through the routine phenomenon of *happen-stance*, where money has had to be spent by the end of each financial year on whatever limited and casual stocks could be managed by the booksellers of the country. What a state of helplessness!

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# Acute Shortage of Research Level Books in Science & Technology in India

## What Can We Do About It?

J.N. Kapur\*

### Some Basic Questions

Some questions which the Editor has raised on behalf of readers of *University News* are : "Why is it that our own output of research-level books in the university and the publishing industry in general does not come to our expectations in meeting our research requirements? Has it got some thing to do with the nature of research that is being carried out in the country or are the problems taken up for research not original? What are the remedies that you feel are necessary to meet the situation?"

One would have thought that when there is a severe shortage of research-level books and journals, due to resource crunch, our authors and publishers will rise to the occasion and fill in the vacuum so that we will not only be able to meet our requirements, but will be able to meet the requirements of some of our neighbouring countries, which do not have the intellectual or entrepreneurial resources to meet the shortage in the same manner in which we have. There has been some movement in this direction, but our response to the situation has been extremely slow and half-hearted. Why is it so? What are the obstacles and how can we accelerate the pace?

The most important step is to provide right incentives for the authors and publishers so that they may undertake the bold steps required.

### Incentives for Authors

We have a very large number of scientists; in fact we have the third largest scientific manpower in the world. However, if we consider the number of excellent scientists capable of writing good research-level books or advanced-level books, then the number is extremely limited and in this cate-

gory, our position can be twentieth or even thirtieth in the world.

One reason is that after Independence, we have constantly supported quantity against quality, mediocrity against excellence, shallow knowledge against deep scholarship and sycophancy against merit. We have seen standards of science education fall steadily in schools, colleges and universities. We have also seen steady erosion of ethical, moral and scientific values and we have not taken any steps to arrest or reverse the trends. The prevailing climate of corruption, nepotism, favouritism may be harmful in all walks of life, but it can be fatal to excellence in science. Another reason is that we have not learnt to admire the good work done by our own colleagues, though we are very alert in criticising any shortcomings on their part. We easily form coteries in which members support one another irrespective of the quality of work done and criticise those outside the coterie, again irrespective of what they are doing. There are some notable exceptions to this, but a general climate of this type always harms excellence.

One result is that Indian professors in general do not consider the books written by other Indian professors as worth purchasing. They are not always wrong in this because some of our authors do produce second-rate books, again due to lack of depth and scholarship. However, one should have the courage to use discrimination and buy all good Indian high-level books, but some professors consider it preferable and safer not to buy Indian books, so that they are not criticised by others, who may have grudges against some authors whose books may be purchased.

The net result is that advanced-level books do not have a sufficient market in the country in spite of there being about a 1000 universities, higher institutes of learning, national laboratories and specialised libraries, which can buy cheaper Indian books even if they cannot buy costly foreign books.

The morale of our scientists is low and there is not enough recognition for authors writing high

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level books. Some universities in their application forms do not have even a column asking applicants for books written and even if there is such a column, it makes no distinction between high-school textbooks and research-level books.

If the nation wants research-level books, it must give more recognition to authors-cum-researchers than to pure researchers. Our National Science Academies may institute awards and medals for writing research-level books. There is an inbuilt inhibition against recognition of authors of high-level books. Quite often, it is considered as a lower level activity than doing research. It is even considered that only those scientists write books who cannot do research and as such if some scientists write books, it is presumed they are no longer doing active research and consequently fall in the esteem of their colleagues. It is asked as to how an active research scientist can find time for writing high-level books, which is a time consuming activity and it must be at the cost of his research. This may again be true. But producing research-level books is even a greater contribution to the country, in our present state of development, than writing research papers which may or may not even be read.

Another important reason for the lack of production of high quality books in India is our educational system and the inflexibility of the procedures by which new courses can be introduced in most universities. A teacher, even at the highest level has no freedom to teach what he likes or in the manner he likes. A new course has to pass so many hurdles and even then a real innovative course does not have a very good chance of being approved.

In all developed countries, teachers have much greater freedom in designing innovative courses and writing new books for these courses. There new courses are taught for 2-3 years, lecture notes are developed and classroom tested and then they are published after they are got carefully referred by publishers and edited by specialist editors.

Another reason why our research scientists sometimes shy away from writing books is that quite often they pursue narrow areas of research in which they can write excellent research papers, but research level books have to be comprehensive and cover a large number of areas which may not fall within the research interests of scientist and the scientist may not be willing to spare time for learning these topics in depth. The reason for this is that in the scientific community in India, pure research is preferred to deep scholarship. Every research

scholar wants to write research level papers within a year of his registration for Ph.D. degree and he has no time for breadth of scholarship. After he starts teaching, he has enough teaching load and enough pressure for publishing papers of any quality that again he does not have time to build up a solid base of knowledge for himself. The result is low-level, low-quality research which is not conducive to writing high-level books.

The scientists in our research laboratories have more time for indepth study but they are quite often under pressure for producing immediate practical results so that sometime they do no new reading at all. There are however some national institutions where researchers have more time for research and where they are not under pressure for producing immediate results, but the total number of such scientists and such institutions is very small and they suffer from the disadvantage that they do not have students to teach or guide at higher levels. Those institutions which have only postgraduate and research programmes, which have sufficient flexibility to teaching and examination system and which have sufficient low loads of teaching are producing good results and books of good quality. One reason for lack of time on the part of most teachers is due to our basic philosophy of teaching in which students have to be spoon-fed and are not given any responsibility for learning on their own. Students do not have any textbooks and depend on classroom notes and help books only. This results in heavy teaching loads and un-motivated learning which is again not conducive to learning in depth.

### **Incentives for Publishers**

The publishers are commercial people and their object is to make money. Some of them may be prepared to publish high-level books even if they break-even, but we cannot expect them to publish advanced-level books at loss for themselves.

They would publish advanced level books if there is sufficient market for such books. Production of good quality high-level books is a costly and time-consuming process. Firstly a publisher has to persuade distinguished scientists to write books. He should also get these books referred in a real sense. He should be paying referees to get worthwhile comments. He should also be able to persuade authors to agree to revise their manuscripts in the light of the suggestions of the referees. He has also to get these books edited by competent editors from the point of view of language and clarity. Finally, he must produce books well and he must

have a high pitch publicity organization to sell these books over the distant markets. All this is done by large foreign publishers with the result that the costs of their books are high.

If our publishers follow the same procedure which is being followed in other countries, they can still produce books in India which will be highly competitive and which can sell at almost 10 to 20% of the price of the foreign books. All our publishers who can assure these services should be supported by educational and scientific community which should write books for them and which should purchase books for libraries published by them.

Even in the whole world, the number of such high quality publishers is small and in India, we cannot have too many of them. What happens in other countries is that these publishers do not publish other types of books. Even in research level books, they try and concentrate on specialised areas like medicine, agriculture, science or engineering, etc.

At present stage of our development, our publishers cannot take the risk of publishing only high level books, but some of our publishers should move towards this goal and some are evidently trying in this direction.

Some Indian authors have also got their books published direct from foreign publishers but then these books are quite costly and they are not easily accessible to Indian students and libraries.

It is interesting that our libraries are prepared to buy costly foreign books by our Indian authors, but are not so enthusiastic about the books by the same authors published in India.

Another method which some of our publishers have adopted is to enter into partnership with some leading foreign publishers. Under this arrangement, Indian publishers persuade Indian scientists to write books, print and publish the same in India, then get the contents approved by their foreign collaborators who agree to buy 500-1000 copies of the book in the first instance for distributing outside India. On these books the names of foreign publishers are given. This policy benefits the author because his books are distributed abroad by an international publisher and at the same time his books are available at cheaper price in India. This gives him both national and international recognition.

The Indian publisher benefits because he has received his cost of publication from guaranteed foreign sales. The foreign publisher benefits because he buys at a cheaper Indian price and sells the books in the international market at 5 to 6 times of its price. The author of course loses because he gets royalty on the Indian price even for books sold outside.

This is again a transitory arrangement and has enabled Indian publishers to produce high level books for the international market but it also means that we are losing valuable money in favour of foreign publishers. The alternative is to have an aggressive international sales organization for higher level books produced in India. No single publisher can be able to do it, but a number of publishers can come together, form a consortium to sell Indian books in the international market.

The publishers can help a great deal in improving the quality of our books both academically and production-wise and if they do so, then they can have a sizeable share of the international market by optimum use of the talents available in India.

#### Role of other Agencies

The government itself cannot do much to produce high level books. The UGC had a programme which was helpful. The National Book Trust subsidised publishing books, but this was not very much applicable to advanced level books. The government can certainly help by generally subsidising the publishing of research level books and insisting on good international level refereeing.

The UGC can also help by recognising the publication of post-M.Sc. research level books as an important criterion for selection and promotion in the university system.

The UGC, the DST and CSIR and other grants giving organisations should sponsor scientists for writing high level books on the same basis on which they support research level projects. As a first step, 10% of research grants may be earmarked for projects for writing advanced level books. The services of distinguished retired scientists can also be used for this work. Some of them can write very good books, but under the present dispensation, they are forced to submit research proposals of all kinds, since grants are mainly for research.

Most universities have publications division through which they publish Ph.D. theses and advanced level books of their own faculty members. Very few of them publish science and technology

books and very few of them have necessary sales organisations. It would be helpful if universities have a Central Sales Organisation for their own publications.

The high level book production programme can be highly accelerated if a sum of Rs. 20 crores per year is exclusively earmarked for this work. This will also demonstrate that the government, scientific research organisations, scientific grants giving agencies and the scientific community considers writing advanced level books as a contribution to research. This itself can be an important breakthrough for encouraging scientists to write good quality books.

### Concluding Remarks

An expenditure of Rs. 20 crores per year on

advanced level research books will provide us an important means of earning good foreign exchange in future. It would also raise quality of Indian research and enhance the prestige of the Indian scientists. When students in India and abroad read books by Indian authors, it will be a great psychological morale booster for our scientists and scholars.

If we want good quality research books, we must provide incentives for our authors and publishers. Since such programmes can raise the intellectual morale of our nation, it is not too high a price to pay.

Let us also be strict about ethical, scientific and moral values and see that our educational system provides greater flexibility and freedom for the teachers and researchers. Good books can come out only in this climate of intellectual freedom.

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# Science & Technology Books for Research

Pawan Sikka\*

Books constitute a treasure of knowledge and have been recognised as a vital instrument for the socio-economic development of the nation.

Our country has a wealth of natural resources and scientific and technological skills and what has been accomplished over the last 46 years constitute the foundation for raising India to higher levels of applied technology. The stress is now on rural reconstruction through massive application of science and technology in the country. For long, rural and animal husbandry, of course, continue to be the main planks of the Indian economy but Indian villages cannot be uplifted without bringing in science and technology in other spheres such as sanitation, cheap rural housing, inexpensive rural roads and harmless chemicals for use of farmers. The life of the average Indian villager will remain separated from modernism of science and technology if it does not permeate into spheres other than agriculture.

The knowledge of science will not only bring them out of the sea of ignorance but also bring about a revolutionary change in their living conditions. Books on science and technology, if written in easy to understand language, can enhance the professional knowledge of the artisans and craftsmen, who can hasten the process of technological development of the country and thus, in turn, will give an impetus to industry in the country.

## Science in Books

The day to day progress made by the research scholars in exploring new frontiers of science and technology is recorded in the unpublished reports, research papers, short communications etc. in the periodicals. It percolates down finally into the books in the form of monographs, symposia proceedings and specialised and reference books. This process regularly keeps on adding new and new books on various facets of science and technology. It also embraces new fields of the interdisciplinary subjects.

Most of the scholarly books are written by west-

ern scholars and scientists. Good scholarship is in many ways culture free but their ideological orientation, their training, interests etc. certainly have an impact on the scholarship.

In India, all efforts have been made in capacity-building in science and technology. There has been a lack of *know-why* culture among Indians while even transferring the *know-who* from the advanced countries. Very few scientists are engaged in *break-through* type of research in the country, but instead are engaged in understanding and developing capabilities in all areas of science and technology. As a result the books even if authored by the Indian authors are not new and original but contain only the state of art in the subject and that too, focussing more on the developments that have taken place in Indian science. This is more so when they take path of least resistance and come out by editing proceedings of national or international conferences. This brings them into lime light as an authority on the subject.

Science and its communication seem to be inextricably bound together so that the production and dissemination of the results of research go hand in hand. Today, the volume of published information is so much during the life-time of a scientist and the amount of truly new information increases so rapidly that he cannot specialise fast enough to keep up with the change.

The pollution of the printed word is so vast that according to Prof. J.D. Bernal, it is easier to make a new scientific discovery than to ascertain whether the given problem has been solved. Technical information is being generated so rapidly that publishing and processing methods must be geared to keep pace with it.

## Information Explosion

The current scientific and technological revolution and its growing impact on all facets of life in contemporary society are a hallmark of our time. With the rapid advancement of science and technology, the organisation and further development of scientific and technical information (STI) services is one of the pressing problems of the day.

The 5-6 million articles that appear annually in 30-35,000 scientific and technical periodicals give a

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\*Director, Department of Science & Technology, New Delhi.

fitting description of the variety and scope of the present day scientific and technological endeavour. According to UNESCO data, this figure is likely to more than double within the next 10-15 years. To process such enormous volume of information, information centres and libraries are being equipped with new technology, the variety and characteristics of which only a few years ago would have seemed unimaginable (electronic computers, computerised information print-out directly on microfilm, printers operating at the speed of 6 million characters per hour, more than 200 different copying machines, etc).

The scientific information forms an important infrastructure for the technological and the industrial development of the country. Scientific communities and national governments are becoming more and more cognisant of the pervasive role which S&T information plays in the social and technological development of the nation. Scientific information, has, therefore, to be considered as an important national resource to be developed and made available to those who need it. It can aid in the decision making and or in the transfer of technology. Thus, the dissemination of S&T information is as much important as its generation. And creation and dissemination of knowledge is a complex process in any society.

### Scene in India

India stands seventh or eighth in the world in terms of number of titles published every year and can be easily termed as one of the world's largest publishing nations. But the total number of books published annually is not more than 5% of the corresponding figures for European countries.

In a paper submitted recently at the planning meeting on training courses in book production, organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat, it was stated: "For a variety of historic, economic and social reasons, the publishing industries of Commonwealth developing countries have not, as yet, grown sufficiently strong to provide all the books that their societies need to promote and sustain their development programmes or to meet many of the reading requirements of the people".

In general, then it may be said that throughout the developing Commonwealth many millions of people do not have access to the books they need and that in consequence educational objectives are

not being achieved, social and cultural development is being retarded, and literacy programmes are receiving insufficient support.

Writing, editing and publishing of the books on science pose various problems to its tribe. Scientists who know science cannot present or write well and others who are well versed in the art of writing do not know science. Science Editors have to be specially trained for this purpose. Scientists prefer to do research and write research papers than to compile a book.

The exact use of language, presentation of style, graphs, illustrations etc. mark the special layout and authenticity of the science books. Very few publishers come forward to take up new books on science. The reason is obvious, i.e. their marketing position. The coming time should change the present situation. The science editor should seem to offer the best possible means towards improving this environment with the maximum benefit to the communication process as much as to the field of science & technology.

All indications are that future research will continue to increase in quantity and more important, in complexity. Those who can blend the results of sophisticated scientific investigations with the communication techniques will have a key role not only in the publication of books on scientific research but also in the dissemination of knowledge towards the socio-techno-economic development of India.

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## TO OUR READERS

Knowledgeable and perceptive as they are, our contributors must not necessarily be allowed to have the last word. It is for you, the readers, to join issues with them. Our columns are as much open to you as to our contributors. Your communications should, however, be brief and to the point.

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# Paradigm Change for Better Science Management

P.V. Indiresan\*

India is currently in the throes of an economic revolution, and that has thrown out of gear established mores of managing science. Instead of being an end in itself, science is now expected to be the means for economic prosperity — for immediate prosperity in fact. Naturally, that has caused considerable consternation in scientific and university circles. As Kuhn points out, it is as yet unresolved whether "science should (or need not) be socially useful". Yet, Indian scientists have been forced to concede that science needs to be useful, but what that usefulness should be remains unclear. In any case, the political climate is decidedly adverse — so, attempts are being made to tackle the situation politically. That itself is a retreat from intellectualism, an acceptance that political antagonism cannot be tackled intellectually. However, it does not appear wise to tackle politicians with their own weapons; it might still be worthwhile to examine how the crisis may be resolved intellectually. A good way to make a start is to go back to fundamentals. For that purpose I commend a re-look at Kuhn's classic text on how science has made sustained progress in recent centuries. (*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd Edition. Thomas S. Kuhn, U Of Chicago Press, 1970.) Kuhn's story is the story of Western Europe. According to him :

The bulk of scientific knowledge is a product of Europe in the last four centuries. No other place and time has supported the very special communities from which scientific proclivity comes. (p.168)

Indian nationalists will question such an assertion and point to various Indian texts of the hoary past to counter how perspicacious Indian scholars were. That is precisely the point: Aryabhata did indeed postulate a helio-centric universe, but he never went beyond philosophical speculation, nor did he find a school of astronomy which extended the thought farther and farther. The fecundity of Copernicus and the infertility of Aryabhata in fa-

thering a *continuing* school of intellectual progress is the issue which Indian scientists and educationists should study before they can hope to make an impression on hard boiled politicians. That is, they would better enquire why Western science has been as prolific as it has been, and why Indian science has been relatively sterile in the past, and continues to be so in spite of having the "third largest scientific manpower in the world".

This assertion about the size of the Indian scientific manpower is true only when science graduates who are bus conductors and the like are included; it is grossly false when we confine ourselves to those who are actually engaged in scientific activities. Yet, we continue to boast of our numerical strength, trot it out from public platforms *ad nauseam* as though numbers, and not the quality, that is significant. Such emphasis on quantity arises out of a feeling which was pithily described by one of our great vice-chancellors in the early years of Independence: "out of quantity will come quality!"<sup>1</sup>. That attitude persists to this day. As a result, we tend to emphasize quantity to the detriment of quality. Thus, the worry of our educationists today is more about quantitative reductions rather than qualitative decline, and our hope is quality will somehow emerge out of quantity. On the other hand, what we may learn from this study of Kuhn is the opposite process — how quantity increases naturally through quality.

What Kuhn elaborates in this book is his interpretation of the "scientific paradigm" :

universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners (p. viii).

It must be borne in mind that the community that Kuhn talks about is small in numbers, often a handful, generally not more than a few hundred. Also, the paradigm that typifies one scientific community may differ from that of another. Kuhn gives an interesting example: Is a single atom of helium a molecule or not? For a chemist, "Yes !" — according to kinetic theory of gases; for a physicist, "no !" — because it does not display a molecular spectrum

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(p. 51). So, we are not talking of one universal scientific paradigm, but about a set of them, one set for each group of scientists, but all sets having similar characteristics. The particular paradigm any group adopts determines where it stands, specifies its scientific location as it were. In general, for science to exploit the paradigm, it should have two significant characteristics :

1. Sufficiently unprecedented to attract an enduring group of adherents away from competing modes of scientific activity.

2. Sufficiently open-ended to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners to resolve (p. 10).

"Paradigm" is a concept which it is easier to describe what it is about, rather than define what it is. I prefer to describe paradigm as a set of articles of faith which condition the attitude and work of the concerned people: the accepted laws of nature; the theories that emerge from such laws; the processes — both analytical and experimental — which are permissible to solve problems or puzzles which may be devised from the foregoing; and the set of puzzles (the "exemplars") that have already been solved in that manner. All these taken together constitute the paradigm; in addition, the rules by which new puzzles may be set to articulate, to exemplify and to extend the domain of the paradigm still further, should also be taken into account.

Kuhn addresses himself to the question why — of all intellectual disciplines — science alone appears to move in a continually forward path. According to Kuhn, since the time of renaissance, the progress of science has been steady, ever progressing forward, never regressing backward. That has been so because of the way scientific revolutions occur, and the way they get assimilated. Considering how our leaders keep harping back to the past, Kuhn's hypotheses why Western science makes sustained progress should be of particular interest for us Indians.

### The Structure of Scientific Revolutions

In science, the paradigm is simultaneously both a matter of faith and a field for enquiry; science progresses by adopting a paradigm faithfully (Newtonian mechanics for instance), and discarding it for a better one when the paradigm fails to satisfy (changing over to relativistic mechanics). Every such shift constitutes a scientific revolution.

The purpose of a university is to train youth in the faith of the latest paradigm; teach them to be faithful, devoutly faithful in fact until something better comes along.

Thus, science has two phases: The more common one is that of normal science where faith in the current paradigm prevails. Normal science is

"the activity in which most scientists inevitably spend almost all their time, is predicated on the assumption that the scientific community knows what the world is like; and conducts "research firmly based upon one or more past scientific achievements, achievements that some particular scientific community acknowledges for a time as supplying the foundation for its further practice .... As a corollary, normal science suppresses fundamental novelties because they are necessarily subversive of its basic commitments" (p. 5). Further, "no part of the aim of normal science is to call for the new sorts of phenomena; indeed those that will not fit the box (the paradigm) are often not seen at all. Nor do scientists normally aim to invent new theories, and they are often intolerant of those invented by others" (p. 24).

That is, normal science is the phase in which to question the paradigm is blasphemy; for instance, who will at present question Maxwell's laws of electromagnetics, the theory of relativity or Planck's quantum theory? Not so long ago, a similar faith was placed in Newtonian mechanics or Dalton's theory of the atom. Yet, though temporary, such a faith is crucial: "No natural history can be interpreted in the absence of at least some implicit body of intertwined theoretical and methodological belief that permeates selection, evaluation and criticism" (p. 17).

During the period of normal science, scientists frame more and more elaborate (as well as novel) "puzzles" — problems for which solutions are predictable — as with jigsaw puzzles. The aim is to check whether the laws, the theory, the analytical rules, and the experimental techniques of the paradigm taken together predict correctly or not. Inevitably, in due course of time anomalies occur. Initially, the paradigm is assumed to be right, and the attempt is confined to re-interpret the paradigm. After a period, anomalies accumulate and become mutually irreconcilable. That leads to a crisis, the faith in the old paradigm collapses, and a number of



candidates for a new paradigm appear. Ultimately, the old theory has to go. However,

a scientific theory is declared invalid only if an alternative candidate is available to take its place . . . . The decision to reject on paradigm is always simultaneously the decision to accept another, and the judgement leading to that decision involves the comparison of both paradigms with nature *and* with each other. (p.77, italics original)

The replacement of the old paradigm by a new one — which then acquires a monopoly over the minds of the concerned scientists — constitutes a scientific revolution. Such a revolution marks the beginning of yet another period of normal science. Then, the cycle re-starts and repeats again and again. Incidentally,

Almost always the men who achieve these fundamental inventions of a new paradigm have either been very young or very new to the field whose paradigm they change. These are the men who, being little committed by prior practice to the normal rules of, are particularly likely to see that those rules no longer define a playable game and to conceive another set that can replace them (p. 90).

### Textbooks and Universities

Universities and textbooks play a crucial role in closing the revolution: textbooks redefine knowledge, and universities teach the new generation of students to become devotees of the new paradigm. One of the crucial points made by Kuhn is that scientists do not, as a rule, study original texts — instead they prefer to depend on textbooks and current literature. (Compare theologians for whom original scriptures, and original scriptures alone, remain ever and ever the ultimate authority; or even social scientists for whom original readings are an important part of education.) In science :

Textbooks ... have to be rewritten in whole or in part whenever the language, the problem structure, or standards of normal science change. In short, they have to be rewritten in the aftermath of each scientific revolution, and once rewritten, they inevitably disguise not only the role but the very existence of the revolutions that produced them ... textbook literature extends only to the outcome of the most recent revolutions in the field.... Textbooks thus begin by

truncating the scientist's sense of this discipline's history (p. 137).

That is a social advantage even if it be a historical loss because :

somehow, the practice of astronomy, physics, chemistry or biology normally fails to evoke the controversies over fundamentals that today often seem endemic among, say, psychologists or sociologists (p.viii).

In other fields, paradigms do not collapse under attack; in science they do, but gracefully. Einstein's theory can be accepted only with the recognition that Newton's was wrong. Yet, Newton continues to command respect and honour. Such tolerance and respect to superseded scholars is unthinkable in other fields.

At the same time, though important, textbooks are *not* the top priority for an active scientist :

the scientist who writes one (a book) is more likely to find his professional reputation impaired than enhanced. Only in the earlier pre-paradigm stages of the development of the various sciences did the book ordinarily possess the same relation to professional achievement that it still retains in other creative fields (p. 20).

Here is food for thought: textbooks are necessary to distill the achievements of the past into the current paradigm, but writing one is apparently a second-rate activity ! Then, as the training of youth is the charge of teachers and of universities, even if though it is unglamorous, it becomes the duty of teachers, the responsibility of universities to write textbooks.

### Normal Science

Interestingly enough, the faithful pursuit of any paradigm during the epoch of normal science is itself the cause of loss of faith in that paradigm. That is so because, normal science does not merely parrot the paradigm — the way we commit to memory Vedic texts; instead, it strains the paradigm to ever extending limits — with newer and newer puzzles. That is how the faith of normal science differs from that of religion. Further,

... normal research problems aim (little) to produce major novelties — conceptual or phe-

nomenal ... the project whose aim is paradigm articulation does not aim at the *unexpected* novelty (emphasis original). Though its (normal research) outcome can be anticipated, often in detail so great that what remains to be known is itself uninteresting, the way to achieve that outcome remains very much in doubt. ... The man who succeeds proves himself an expert puzzle solver.

"Puzzles are ... that special category of problems that can serve to test ingenuity or skill in solution ... the really pressing problems, e.g. cure for cancer or the design of a lasting peace are often not puzzles at all, largely because they may not have any solution. Though intrinsic value is no criterion for a puzzle, the assured existence of a solution is (pp. 35-37)."

This is the kind of research that normal science conducts; the kind of research which ought to be the responsibility of a university. Unfortunately, that did not occur to our science administrators at the time of Independence. So, they largely diverted research to specialized institutions outside academia, mixed it up with technology development, and relegated universities to the background as far as scientific research was concerned. In consequence, both science and technology have suffered, and Indian universities reverted to ancient stereotype : to have faith but not the questioning spirit. That is why textbooks rule Indian universities, and few have access to, or interest in, current literature the way Western universities have had for the past several centuries.

In the present context, here is food for thought : Should a university be expected to find a cure for cancer, or should it be supported only because it solves "puzzles" that arise out of the current paradigm? According to Kuhn, the scientific community functions best with problems which can :

insulate the community from those socially important problems that are not reducible to puzzle form, because they cannot be stated in terms of the conceptual and instrumental tools the paradigm supplies ... . One of the reasons why normal science seems to progress so rapidly is that its practitioners concentrate on problems that only their lack of ingenuity should keep them from solving ... The scientific enterprise does from time to time prove useful, open up new territory, display order, and test

long accepted belief. Nevertheless, the *individual* engaged on a normal research problem is *almost never doing any of these things* (pp. 37-38, emphasis original).

Here is an explanation why science has made steady progress in the West: Scientists tackle only that which they can, not what they must. Science can be useful, but that is not its basic aim. That is why :

Unlike the engineer and many doctors and most theologians, the scientist need not choose problems because they urgently need solution and without regard to the tool available to solve them (p. 164).

It is only this kind of *esoteric research which is the harbinger of new discoveries, which is the best mode of scientific progress*. As Kuhn points out, this kind of puzzle-solving activity is highly cumulative enterprise :

New and unsuspected phenomena are, however, repeatedly uncovered by scientific research ... (Then) research under a paradigm must be a particularly effective way of inducing a paradigm change. Produced inadvertently by a game played under one set of rules, their assimilation requires the elaboration of another set (p. 52).

As Kuhn explains, discovery commences with the awareness of an anomaly, i.e., with the recognition that nature has somehow violated the paradigm-induced expectations that govern normal science. Then, discovery can occur only when the current paradigm is exercised faithfully and meticulously. Further :

professionalization leads on the one hand to immense restriction of the scientist's vision and to a considerable resistance to paradigm change ... On the other hand, ... normal science leads to a detail of information and to a precision of the observation-theory match that could be achieved in no other way ... Without the special apparatus that is mainly constructed for anticipated functions, the results that ultimately lead to novelty could not occur. And even when the apparatus exists, novelty ordinarily emerges only for the man, knowing with *precision* what he should expect, is able to recognize that some-

thing has gone wrong. Anomaly appears only against the background provided by the paradigm. (p. 65)

That is an interesting argument in favour of specialization. The generalist, the man of broad vision who is so much in favour now, is unlikely to make discoveries, for the simple reason he cannot recognise a discovery when it comes across one — only a specialist can recognise what has gone wrong! These arguments are, currently, *not* fashionable, nor acceptable; in fact, get to be condemned as ivory tower isolationism. Yet, by Kuhn's account, a tangential trajectory away from utility is ultimately for the best; that is the way science progresses fastest, deserves patronage most.

### Conclusion

In recapitulation :

1. Normal science is game for solving puzzles, not a means for solving societal problems;
2. such untargeted puzzle-solving is the most effective way of identifying anomalies;
3. identifying anomalies is the necessary prelude to further progress;
4. anomalies can be identified only by specialist groups, which, because they are specialized, can be composed of small numbers only;
5. a change may be initiated only when there is something definitely better to replace the old.

Further, one other, quite well known, point made by Kuhn is worth repeating :

There are no other professional communities in which individual creative work is so exclusively addressed to and evaluated by other members in the profession (p. 164).

Science has pressed forward inexorably by changing the paradigm every time there was a knowledge-crisis; likewise, a paradigm change will be appropriate also for the science-management crisis we are witnessing today. Then, if we accept Kuhn's historical analysis why the West has succeeded better in science, we would better consider a paradigm shift as below :

### Old Paradigm

Science must serve society

Quantity will produce quality

Science must be administered

Science needs a few large groups

Study of science is a democratic right

Scientists must have careers

Science is best conducted in government laboratories

### Alternative Paradigm

Science must pursue knowledge

Quality is basic; with quality, quantity will follow

Science is a cooperative of peers.

Science is done best by a large number of small sized groups.

Science is for the capable

Science is for the youthful

University is the primary domain of science

The basic worry today is, how to garner sufficient support for science. Instead of beating breasts in despair the way the science czars are doing, we may consider a paradigm shift for science management on the above lines. However, such a shift appears unlikely, for, if quality is to replace quantity, many of our science and university establishments are liable to be closed down. Scientific paradigms routinely commit harakiri, but not scientists, certainly not Indian scientists!

Still, we need not lose heart. As Planck has said:

a new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it.<sup>2</sup>

Let us hope the next generation will see the light. One such light is Kuhn's book; difficult to read and digest, but worth the trouble, and a must for budding scientists.

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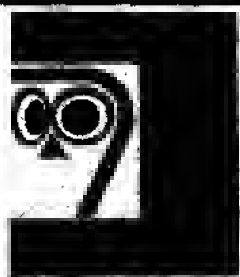
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# Indian English Literature in the Global Context

India was the theme for the Annual Conference of German University Professors of English held at Eichstatt, Bavaria (Germany) from 26-29 September 1993. A number of papers were presented by German Scholars on English in India; Professor Meenakshi Mukherjee, Chairperson, Centre for Linguistics and English, School of Languages, Jawaharlal Nehru University was the Key-note Speaker at this conference. After the conference was over, Professor Gerhardt Stiltz from the University of Tubringen spoke to Professor Mukherjee on the theme of the conference. What follows is a text of that conversation which touches upon certain crucial issues in the discourse of Post-colonial and Commonwealth Literature. Professor Stiltz has published many papers in this field.

Professor Mukherjee is the author of several books including *The Twice Born Fiction: Themes and Techniques in Indian Writing in English* (Heinemann 1971) and *Realism and Reality: Novel and Society in India* (Oxford University Press, 1985).

G.S. The German convention of university professors of English chose "English language and literature in India" as a focus for their 1993 meeting at Eichstatt. How do you place this decision in the "global context" of an increasing awareness of English as a world language and of literature in English as a worldwide phenomenon?

M.M. Although I am aware that all over the world, in the field of English studies there is a growing awareness of post-colonial literatures, the focus exclusively on India in this year's German convention for university professors of English did seem quite extraordinary to me for two reasons. One: India was singled out as an specific area to be examined in its own terms rather than as part of a larger collectivity like Commonwealth Literature or Third World Literature or New Literatures in English. Secondly, not only literature, but the varieties of the English language used in India were also taken up for analysis and scrutiny.

G.S. Being the representative colleague from India, the lectures and discussions held at Eichstatt must have been quite an unusual experience to you. How strange or how familiar did our academic concerns appear to you?

M.M. I was very impressed by the meticulousness and rigour that the papers displayed. The papers did not seem 'strange' at all, although I must say, had the conference been in India perhaps the emphases might have been slightly different. For example, Professor Remenschneider's paper on the critical tradition of looking at Indian writing in English made me realise that such work cannot be done by any Indian in India (the other names that I can think of are either American or Indian residents in America) perhaps because we tend not to take ourselves too seriously or because we lack the distance to discern the designs that a scholar from another culture can do. Elisabeth Bronfen's paper on Bharati Mukherjee's *Jasmine* was brilliant in its theoretical analysis and Klaus Bonner on Rushdie I found extremely perceptive. I noticed a greater interest in diasporic Indian writers than in those who have stayed at home, and did wonder if among Indian scholars the opposite would not have been true.

G.S. Do you hold that English provides an adequate approach for German and/or other European scholars to deal with Indian affairs? Can English from a contemporary Indian perspective indeed be regarded as a practicable "window to (and from) the world"?

M.M. You have raised here what I think is a very important question specially because you make it a two-way inquiry: English as a window to (and from) the world. Colonial history made it inevitable that from the eighteenth century onwards, the world would become accessible to India only through the filter of the English language. We have been exposed to Europe and the West only via texts transmitted through English translation, and even today, nearly half a century after India's independence, the situation has not changed very much. The translators who can directly render German, French or Spanish texts into Indian languages without the mediation of English can be counted on the fingers of one's hand. This results in a somewhat skewed concept of "the west".

As an illustration of this let me refer to an incident that happened only last week. I had gone to attend a lecture on 'Colonialism and the Novel in

India' by Professor Namwar Singh who is among the most important Hindi critics today. He argued that the 'Western model' of narrative fiction had a confining and inhibitive effect not only on the development of the novel in India, but also on the critical perspective that evaluated the novels.

He made out a case for an alternative tradition in Hindi beginning from the nineteenth century and continuing even today that has been kept out of the canonical discourse because the texts in this tradition collapse the familiar western distinction between the novel (with its privileging of realism) and the romance (with its imaginative and narratological freedom). There was an intervention from the German scholar Dr. Lothar Lutze (now resident in India) who pointed out that in German one word 'roman' suffices for both novel and romance, and the distinction exists only in the English language. Thus to talk of the 'Western narrative tradition' in a monolithic sense — a common enough fallacy in India — as if the British tradition (which itself incidentally is far from being homogenous) is the dominant literary tradition in the Western world is traceable to our total dependence on this one window to let in the Western breeze.

That this window completely shuts out air from other directions, that we have very little literary exposure to China, Japan and the other Asian countries is a realisation that has only very lately begun to bother the Indian intelligentsia. Since more and more trade relationships are opening up among the Asian countries it is possible that literary interaction may also follow. For that one would need to make a conscious effort to bypass the mediating role of English.

As for the other part of the inquiry — whether English can be an adequate medium for an "European scholar to deal with Indian affairs", I would try to take it up in detail when I respond to the twelfth point in your questionnaire. Briefly I can say here that when less than 5% of the population of India read and write English, this language naturally does not give an entirely representative view of how this vast sub-continent functions. But this 5% has a special status in the country and they enjoy a power and privilege quite disproportionate to their numerical strength. English is also used for a great deal of pan-Indian communication in the political, economic and to a lesser extent in the cultural arena. Many of the Indians in this 5% are bilinguals, but their mother tongues may vary. Thus English

becomes the common denominator and hence the language of discourse at the all-India level. If it is an inadequate medium for understanding the culture, the European scholar is not the only one to be handicapped by this fact. She would have for company some scholars who live in India, and great many diasporic Indians.

G.S. The programme of the India section at Eichstatt consisted of four literary and three linguistic papers, in addition to the plenary lecture. Did this appear to be a balanced arrangement? Which other major aspects should be accommodated in such a programme in future?

M.M. I found each of the papers interesting from one point of view or another. It is difficult for me to be prescriptive about future programmes, because German interest in India has to be determined by the scholars here rather than by anyone outside.

G.S. From your experiences at Eichstatt, do you feel that there are things concerning India that can be seen more clearly from outside? In particular, are there any projects, perspectives, methods or theoretical paradigms that German colleagues would seem to be especially keen or well-equipped to follow?

M.M. The papers on Indian English by German seemed to me to be doing something that is not done with such rigour in India. I am not a linguist myself, and I may have used Indian English all my life without being conscious of its special syntactic and other features. We take it all too much for granted and the thin line between incorrect English and Indian English at least for me remains problematic. The advertisements and recipes that professor Manfred Gorchach took as his sample in his papers are things I read all the time, often chuckle over them or share their phrases with friends as jokes, but perhaps one needs a certain distance to treat them as data and bring an objective analytical approach to them.

G.S. In Indian university departments of English, the study of Indian English language and literature has tremendously grown during the time of your academic career. Which are a) the main public attitudes to this phenomenon, b) its driving factors, and c) the effect on the structure of English studies in Indian tertiary education that might be prognosticated for the near future?

# "The Fatal Eggs"

## A Lesson for Posterity

A. Charumati Ramdas\*

"Manuscripts don't burn", says one of the characters in M. Bulgakov's novel "Master and Margarita". That refers not to the physical existence of the manuscripts, but the matter contained in them — their content, their soul. So far as Bulgakov's works are concerned, this soul is eternal, the message conveyed (be it realistically, ironically or fantastically expressed) is always relevant: for all ages, all people, all societies, all governments.

Mikhail Afanasyevich Bulgakov (1891-1940), a doctor by profession, began his literary career with humorous sketches in various newspapers, especially *Gudok* ("The Siren"). Two decades of this literary activity saw his struggle against odds, against ill-wishers, to defend his principles. During 1924-26, Bulgakov published two parts of his novel "The White Guard" and two collections of satirical short stories "Diaboliad" and "A Treatise on Housing".

In 1924, Bulgakov published the novelette "The Fatal Eggs". But, the novelette "A Dog's Heart", which he wrote in 1925, could be published in USSR only after Perestroika.

His magnum opus "Master and Margarita", to which he devoted 12 long years (1928-40), was cleared for publication in the Soviet Union only in 1967. It is by now well known to Western and Indian readers as well.

"M. and M." is a synthesis of reality, fantasy, religion, humour, satire, irony, almost everything that could be contributed to a piece of literature. But, few would suspect that Bulgakov had been experimenting with that kind of combination since much earlier : since 1924. He toys with it in his satirical stories, but not for the sake of literary innovation. It is for something else. Buried deep deep under the mountain, as it were, of Bulgakov's satire, there is something startling, which can be deciphered only if one reads closely, very carefully, not

just what is between the lines, but even that, which is hidden behind what is between the lines. Each work of Bulgakov, whether a story, a novelette or a novel, has so much to convey, however invisible to the naked eye as it were, that volumes and volumes could be produced while decoding the message. Here, an effort is made to discover the hidden message in "The Fatal Eggs" (*Rokovye yaytsa*).

The plot of the novelette is deceptively simple. A surface reading would convey the statement that scientific innovations could be immensely useful to mankind if exploited properly, but can lead to disaster and catastrophe if they fall into the hands of the misinformed. Prof. Persikov is quite satisfied with his experiments on toads and other harmless creatures until he accidentally discovers the Red Ray of Life. Under the influence of this Ray, a new and stronger variety of living organisms could be created. The discovery is a revolution in the field of life sciences. Soon, the news of Persikov's invention spreads like wild fire. The authorities decide to use his Ray for producing a better variety of poultry, which was on the verge of extinction due to plague. All of Persikov's equipment is shifted to Smolensk and set up in a Soviet State Farm (*Sovkhoz*). Eggs specially imported from Germany are placed under the Ray of life. But, alas! The 'fatal' eggs produced not chicken, but snakes and crocodiles, which, under the influence of the Red Ray, acquired enormous proportions and strength. They unleash a reign of horror in the province, eating off the victims after breaking their limbs and bones with their powerful clutches and jaws. Horror of horrors, they multiply in no time, with every new reptile surpassing all the previous ones in size, strength and tyranny. A whole army of these deadly creatures comes out of the hot-house and proceeds towards Moscow, devouring everything on the way. All efforts to liquidate them fail. People in their anger against the inventor of the ray of death (?) lynch Persikov and his assistants. Only a severe snowfall that lasted 3 full days could finally wipe out the reptiles from the face of earth. Persikov and his invention were gradually forgotten. Remarkably enough, all efforts to produce the Red Ray of life again proved futile.

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The novelette, a seemingly simple and innocent story advocating proper use of scientific innovations, is, however, pregnant with hidden messages. Bulgakov makes it all look simple by mixing elements of fantasy, realism, science fiction, bitter satire, grotesque situations, and also a concern for ethics (By the way, are you by now reminded of today's "Jurassic Park" and Yesterday's "Honey, I shrunk the kids"?)

"The Fatal Eggs" belongs to the 20's, the period of war communism, when people were made to (along with a number of other things) practically shrink in their homes. Three rooms from Prof. Persikov's 5-room apartment are taken away to accommodate others. They were returned to him only in 1926. Thus, the story has a melancholy opening: Persikov's wife runs away with a singer in 1913, and the toads in his laboratory die of starvation one after the other. That forces the reptiles to their extinction and then even the cockroaches start disappearing.

Rarely does a 'thing' begin with death, come to life mid-way through and again die towards the end. During such a period of short-lived optimism, Prof. Persikov continues with his lectures at the Institute and his experiments in the laboratory.

It was then that he made his discovery. Observing some amoeba in a suspension under the microscope, Persikov suddenly notices that certain amoeba, under the influence of a light beam, started multiplying at lightning speed and devouring one another. In the merciless battle, the strong conquered the weak and also multiplied, with each new one emerging bigger and stronger. In the beam of light that was falling on the suspension, Persikov could distinctly see a "sharp sword-like ray of red colour".

That is one clue. The ray was red — the colour of communism, and it was sharp as a sword — ruthless. And only the sharp red sword could make the amoeba defy all norms, violate all known laws. Those under the umbrella of the communist regime of the day could do the same. The regime is the catalyst for an unending struggle for survival, for power. And every survivor and every newcomer is bigger, stronger and more fearsome.

The country was ravaged first by the First World War (1914-1918), then by the Civil War (1918-1922). In between, it underwent two revolu-

tions — the failed February and the 'successful' October revolutions of 1917. And, history only knows too well what kind of struggle for power ensued after the death of V.I. Lenin in 1924. In this holocaust, not just the imperial family was liquidated, not just the White Guard (*Mensheviks*) was destroyed, even *Bolsheviks* conveniently disappeared in thousands. Even among the 'own' people, it is not just the harmless toads that are liquidated, not just the deadly reptiles that come to extinction. If even cockroaches, which can normally go without food for a whole month and can easily survive the worst of natural calamities — since they can devour practically anything, right from food crumbs through soap to iron and steel — if even these most efficient scavengers start disappearing, one can imagine the vagaries of this struggle for existence.

Note Bulgakov's choice of towns — Smolensk and Moscow — for setting up Persikov's Red Ray equipment and for the destination of the deadly creatures. Smolensk boasted of the Party Headquarters and Moscow was the capital. In Persikov's laboratory, his invention is tested only on harmless toads. And the experiment is successful. In Smolensk, even the inventor is not consulted. Worse still, his equipment is exploited by the illiterate Director of State Farm, who cannot tell hen's eggs from those of snakes and crocodiles. This speaks volumes about Bulgakov's opinion about the brains that run the Party. And the deadly products of this Smolensk march towards the seat of power, the capital.

The name of the illiterate, yet authoritative and greedy Sovkhoz Director is Rokk. The Russian word for 'Fate' (neutral) is "Sud'ba" but the word for 'Fate' (usually tragic) is 'rok'. By adding just one more 'K' to make the Director's name, whose pronunciation is nevertheless the same, Bulgakov makes his intentions clear.

The title of the story (*Rokovye yaytsa*) too has a story to tell. It can mean 'eggs that are fatal, deadly, harbingers of destruction'. It can also mean eggs handed over by rok, or tragic/evil/doomed Fate'. After all, Fate has always been cruel to Man, hasn't it?

Generally speaking, stories are written based on past or contemporary events. But 'The Fatal Eggs' gives one the feeling that it is based on future events to which the author had an uncanny access, in advance. Several events portrayed in the novel-



ette match with what actually happened after 1924. Not just the march of the products of Smolensk to Moscow, not just the 'dog eat dog' tendencies, the purges of late 20's and the 30's. In the movelette, people run away from Smolensk and the army sets it on fire to get rid of the deadly reptiles. And in the Second World War, almost two decades after 1924 and a few years after Bulgakov's death, the retreating Soviet army and inhabitants burnt and abandoned Smolensk. Was Bulgakov merely hinting that the only finale 'Smolensk' can reach is to go up in flames? Also, the fierce fighting in Vyazma and Mozhaishk and the panic in Moscow and its evacuation during the Second World War are startlingly parallel to Bulgakov's description.

Bulgakov writes the story in 1924, but sets it up in 1928. And he states that Meyerhold "died in 1927". But, Meyerhold actually died in 1940. Bulgakov implies that Meyerhold as a dramatist was as good as dead, one he towed the official line and a theatre was named after him (which actually happened).

Bulgakov misses no opportunity to take a dig at Man. After discovering the Red Ray, Prof. Persikov closely examines the source of the Ray. It was not

coming from the Sun or any other natural source. It was emanating from the electric bulb illuminating his dark gloomy laboratory. All devastating power, all sufferings are artificial, Man-made, aren't they? (Take the case of the earthquake of 1993 in Latur District, if you like. Was it not Man, who built all those deadly dwellings with haphazard boulders and stones loosely held together with mere mud, making them as vulnerable to tremors as a house of cards? Note that the concrete structures and their inhabitants survived the quake.)

Now let us indulge in some worthwhile experiments. Take any society, any government in any country at any point of time in the history of mankind. Wouldn't the history of 'The Fatal Eggs' apply to it? Isn't it always the 'fittest of the day' who survive in the struggle for existence?

Take the recent 'putsch' in Moscow. The inventor of reforms is sidelined and overshadowed, just as Persikov was, and power goes into the hands of those who do not possess the same vision. Can the result be anything other than disaster?

That is the eternal value of Bulgakov's fiction. If only Man learnt at least some lesson from his own experience!

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# Female Self, Sexuality and Struggles

## On Understanding Women's Movement in Maharashtra

S.P. Punalekar\*

### Introduction

Women's movement has gone through several layers of experiences during past three decades; some promising and helpful and some distressing and demoralising. By now some reliable literature is available on various facets of these movements and in the years to come, more critical narratives should be forthcoming which might enable the scholars to ponder over inner dynamics of these movements, including their ideological and organisational complexities.

Today we have authentic and reflective writings of scholars on the subject of feminist perspectives and their movements in India. They include, among others, scholars and/or activists like Gail Omvedt, Neera Desai, Vibhuti Patel, Illina Sen, Madhu Kishwar, Lotika Sarkar, Vasudha Dhagamwar and Sujata Gothaskar. This is just an indicative list, and in reality, many young female scholars and activists are contributing to this literature on feminism and feminist movement in India.

It is in this context, the edited volume by Chhaya Datar, titled *THE STRUGGLE AGAINST VIOLENCE* (published by Mandira Sen for STREE, Calcutta, 1993) makes a valuable reading. This volume offers critical insights into problems of women in Maharashtra and the ways in which they are being addressed by various women's groups, both in urban and rural areas. The task of the present brief is to highlight the central features of four essays in this book which deal with various campaigns. Second objective is to synthesize major trends and tendencies manifest in and through these campaigns.

### Three Campaigns and a Synoptic View

#### *Women's Movement in Maharashtra*

The book is edited by Chhaya Datar, a leading scholar and social activist in Maharashtra. The book in totality investigates into social and cultural bases of social movements, its currents and counter-cur-

rents, campaign leadership and idioms, and above all politico-bureaucratic environment they have to encounter in their struggle for a foothold. The book begins with Chhaya Datar's lucid essay titled: "*The Women's Movement in Maharashtra: An Overview*".

She documents the landmarks in the evolution of women's movement in Maharashtra in three broad phases. The first phase is marked by the rereading of Marx among the young scholars, activists and political workers of the left groups. This happened in 1970s, a period that coincided with severe drought situation in Maharashtra. In this process of rereading, there was increasing participation of the radicalised youth organisations including the Yuvak Kranti Dal. Lohia and other thinkers and their writings became popular then. Marxist study centres became a regular feature in Bombay and Pune, Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini set up under the ideological inspirations of Jayaprakash Narayan was also active in some slum settlements of Bombay. Then came emergency in 1975 which brought in its wake untold unfreedom and repression.

In October 1975, the Women's Liberation Struggle Conference was held at Pune and that 'proved to be a starting point for the united women's movement in Maharashtra.' A bi-monthly *Baija*, a journal devoted to women's question, owes its birth to this conference. Women with marxist inclinations formed Purogami Mahila Sanghatana. During this period, the CPI's own monthly, *Mahila Andolan Patrika* became more regular and 'vigorous after this event'.

She severely criticises tendencies of self-complacency and fragmentation. Reflecting on reasons, she says that in Third World countries like India, there is so much of deprivation of all kinds, that one is always pressurised to do something for those who are deprived. She is also critical of the division of labour between the party ideologues and the field level activists. She vividly describes the strengths and limitations of a women's wing of a Marxist party, called *Stree Mukti Sanghatana*.

The second phase is denoted as *violence against*

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women, coinciding with the Mathura rape case which rallied women from all strata. It was due to fallout of protracted legal battle on the justiciability of acquitting two constables involved with the incidence of rape. Campaign against rape became vigorous and the lawyers, journalists and also ordinary housewives took part in demonstrations in Bombay, Delhi and other cities. The rape issue brought into bold relief two major areas of women's lives, namely control over sexuality and the role of violence in perpetuating the subordination of women. The women's group called *Forum Against Rape* came into existence to fight against the systemic handicaps. Later, this organisation changed its name to *Forum Against Oppression of Women* 'to acquire wider identity'.

The third phase begins sometime around 1986 spearheaded by the *Chandvad Conference* of the Shetkari Sanghatana. Datar has characterised this phase as 'feminism accepted within mass organisations'. Tribals, peasants and workers and their mass organisations began to realise the gender-based inequities and sufferings and also indifference and inaction of the political fora towards disabilities of women. The Chandvad Conference opened a lid and brought into prominence the issues relating to women, which till then were relegated to backyard of mainstream politics. Women workers from Nipani, Dhulia, Pune and other district centres began to narrate their woes and demanded rightful space for their questions and maladies. Organisations like Kashtakari Sanghatana, Bhoomisena, Shramik Mukti Sanghatana, etc. played key role in vigorously supporting these demands.

Shetkari Mahila Aghadi under the leadership of Sharad Joshi brought into limelight the rationale for women's participation in the politics of everyday life. He also emphasised on the need to evolve a *Samagra Mahila Aghadi* where "women from all organisations would come together to take up the issue of fighting local elections and attacking the *goonda* (criminal) elements in the countryside". Chhaya Datar asserts that the women's movement in Maharashtra has touched several aspects of women's lives and has helped in structuring a problematique; however hazy or unclear it might be in terms of its theoretical rigour. She lists examples of articulations against rape, violence, inequality, social insecurity, ecology degradation, etc. as indices of space for women's issues within mainstream culture and politics.

## Campaign against SDT

Now briefly about Ravindra's essay on the campaign against sex determination test (SDT). He tells us about the incident which occurred in Chandigarh where three girls, all literate, intelligent and promising, committed suicide at home. They were: Anita, Sunita and Anamika. They were in deep anguish because of their parents' decision not to abort the male child, while on earlier two occasions, they had gone in for abortion because it was a girl child. That was in March 1989 and this incident marked the beginning of a movement against the SDT in India.

This campaign had several ups and downs and Ravindra notes them with candour and objectivity. For instance, he recapitulates his visit to a doctor at Dhule in Maharashtra who is a specialist in SDT business. This doctor was all praise for his clients. After some time, he gave Ravindra his diary to browse through. Data in diary related to 450 cases that were all jammed in that tiny diary. 'No case papers, no files.' Seeing this callousness, Ravindra writes; "...All the talk of 'data recording' and 'informed consent' that I had read of in medical journals lay meaningless here. What is the use of all these scientific articles and their pious warnings?"

He outlines in clear terms the grounds on which the opposition to SDT is structured. Basis of their opposition is not pro-life, but discrimination. *Choosing the sex of one's child is the most sexist sin*: he avers. Strongly reacting to an argument that female foeticide is preferable to dowry murders and sati, he retorts that, "...This is no choice; we do not accept such a cruel and self-defeating choice. We assert that women do have an option to a dignified life, an option which they have established through sweat, blood and tears".

He elaborates on the underlying pressures on a pregnant woman and the ways in which she is restricted from exercising her own free will. At times, there is cynicism coupled with frustration. Women after living a wretched life feel that a woman's life itself is worthless and hence take such a decision. Ravindra then analyses how the liberal jargon is used to market the technology and services which are detrimental to the health of a mother. He particularly mentions two projects; *surrogate motherhood* and *genetic engineering*. He also articulates quite sharply as to how the campaign against the SDT is essentially a movement towards equality and women's liberation.



He gives vivid description of sex determination 'epidemic' in northern and western India where Gujarat topped the list with SD clinics spreading even in small towns. In October 1985, The Forum against the SDT came up. It was founded in Bombay and its members belonged to diverse background; health, human rights, people's science movement, etc. Stree Mukti Sanghatana took this issue all over rural Maharashtra through its Stree Mukti Yatra. In Gujarat, two organisations, namely GVHA and FASD both located in Ahmedabad, mobilised public opinion against the SDT practices, and in Goa, BAINLANCHO SAAD pressurised the government to introduce "a near-perfect bill in the Assembly".

The new, invigorated campaign began in April 1986 with a workshop in Bombay. It followed with train campaign through counter advertisement with one line message, *BAN SD TESTS*; with a dharna outside a SD clinic; collecting signatures for a letter to the Prime Minister, workshops, seminars and public debates. Then there was a search for new media "to attract the attention of people". Then they decided to file a public interest litigation and were busy in preparing a draft. A senior officer nearing retirement came to their help and prepared a draft of the bill to be introduced in the legislative assembly.

Another important development apart from some moves from the government to carry out official survey and collect insights from the ground level, was that of formation of a group called *Doctors Against Sex Determination (DASD)*, under the leadership of Dr. Inamdar, a young gynaecologist from Goregaon. Later an expert committee on SD and Female Foeticide was set up by the government. The Committee upheld the stand taken by the activists and the NGOs on this issue (May 1987). It recommended for enactment of a special law to prevent the misuse of prenatal diagnostic techniques for sex determination. The bill with amendments was unanimously passed and became an Act known as *Maharashtra Regulation of Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act 1988*.

What is the current status of the issue and campaigning linked with it? A Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) was set up to study the bill introduced in the Parliament and the JPC has already submitted its report. "The bill as suggested by the JPC is only a slightly improved version of the Maharashtra Act, and the major loopholes still remain." Ravindra admits that there is failure on many counts; the principal ones being (a) lack of

contacts and information campaign among the state legislature members; and (b) absence of effective lobbying and failure to translate the issue in clear policy package.

### *Anti-Rape Campaign*

Third essay by Flavia Agnes is on the anti-rape campaign. She narrates the developments beginning from Supreme Court Judgement on Mathura rape case in the early eighties and the sustained campaign thereafter with the help of media publicity. Most significant achievement of this campaign was "its thrust towards legislative reforms in the antiquated rape laws to render justice to rape victims." Besides media, other helpful agencies for the campaign were — civil liberty groups, political parties and progressive legal forums.

But the bill turned out to be an *anti-climax*. How and why? Agnes provides a long commentary on the events culminating into the not-so-desirable circumstances. The activists found that media exposure materially did not help the victim. Stigma attached to rape victim did not decrease. There was no institutional or community support to the woman concerned. In essence, the issue "did not transcend the conservative and traditional definition of 'chastity', 'morality' and 'family honour'". Agnes blames the women's groups for lack of sustained efforts in bringing into action its own perspective. Realising these lacunae, a national conference of activists met at Bombay in April 1990 with a view to rejuvenate the movement. The conference aimed at redefining rape and to provide platform for sharing the experiences of a decade.

Before Mathura rape case, there were several instances of similar atrocities on women. The civil liberty groups had earlier mobilised the people and held protest meetings against such events. But the issue of rape was placed '*within the context of state repression. It did not forcefully emerge as a women's issue.*' The Mathura rape case became prominent because of an initiative of four legal experts who wrote a letter to the Chief Justice of India, and circulated this letter to 'all progressive individuals, civil liberty groups and women's organisations in the country.' Women's groups in several cities galvanised into action, holding meetings and protest demonstrations. The Forum Against Rape (later, Forum Against Oppression of Women) came into existence in Bombay on 12 January 1980 as a response to this legendary letter. But the Mathura case was not reopened. Hence the focus of the campaign was shifted to reform in the rape laws.

Writing on these developments, Agnes admits that it is "a reflection of the setback the movement had already received. The state had succeeded in coopting and subverting the demand raised by the movement. What is worse, this set the trend for the state to coopt and subvert every single demand raised by the women's movement for legal reforms during the decade. The laws on obscenity, sati and prostitution are concrete examples of this phenomenon." (page 117-18). She admits that the campaign has not succeeded in evolving a new definition of rape "beyond the parameters of the patriarchal value system. Indeed the same old notions of chastity, virginity, premium on marriage and fear of female sexuality are reflected in the judgements of the post-amendment period." Hence she pleads for evolving new definition, selective rejection of verdicts of the lower courts, a stricter time limit for deciding all sexual offences, inclusion of marital rape cases and systematic monitoring of rape judgements.

In conclusion, Flavia Agnes notes the following drawbacks of women's movement concerning anti-rape campaign : (a) Lack of sustained support to individual victims. She argues that solutions need to be rooted within the community support system. (b) Mismatch between the needs of the individual victims and the directionality of the campaign. (c) Failure to dissuade the victims from accepting the traditional and accepted solutions. What is needed is a new framework for seeking solutions which would 'take rape out of the patriarchal framework,' and (d) Absence of substantive attitudinal change towards the victim among the family and community members.

#### *Campaign for the Cause of Deserted Women*

The fourth essay deals with the campaign against the injustice and maltreatment meted out to deserted women in Maharashtra. The authors begin by describing the memorable event concerning long march to Sachivalaya in Bombay of over 2000 women, mostly deserted. Initiative for long march was taken by a group called *Samata Andolan* under the leadership of Nisha Shivurkar, a lawyer by profession. The issue was concerned "not only with the reforms in the law but acceptance of a deserted woman by society." The movement was based on a central premise that '*personal is political*', and had several successes and setbacks in their journey.

This essay by Chhaya Datar and Hema Upendra brings out the niceties of struggles with characteristic candour. They briefly narrate history of the legal changes influenced by consistent pressures

created by the women's organisations. The authors stress that the women's movement has to aim at seeking justice within the given system, which is hell-bent on preserving the institution of family. They further argue and with reason that, "The tragedy of laws relating to women is that unlike the labour laws and labour courts which recognise the unequal power balance between labour and management, matrimonial laws and courts are not based upon the understanding of the unequal power relationship between husband and wife."

The essay then proceeds to outline the principal stages of the campaign concerning the deserted women. It began at Sangamner in 1982, where social organisation called *Samata Andolan* took up the issues like child marriage, dowry, dowry deaths, corruption, religious and caste discrimination. It is then the activists realised that there were a large number of deserted women in the region, and their problems received least attention of social reformers or political workers.

They began to conduct survey sometime in August 1987 and visited 55 villages in the Sangamner taluka. Nisha Shivurkar, the main spirit behind this study, said; "The realities of the plight of the deserted women was mind boggling. There must have been around 2000 deserted women in Sangamner taluka alone, 20000 to 25000 in Ahmednagar district, and 6,00,000 in Maharashtra. "After the survey, the conference was held which was attended by the deserted women, their parents and the public. Some 1500 persons attended this conference on 20 March 1988.

It was followed with representations, appeals, etc. to the government. Then there was a programme of organising a march in May 1990. Some 1000 deserted women participated in this march which was led by activists like Gail Omvedt, Shivurkar, Khatu, etc. This was in Ahmednagar, a district town in Maharashtra. One month later, the group met the Collector. It was indeed heartening to note that the Collector immediately accepted certain demands such as shelter for the deserted women, two gunthas of gauthan land, provision of ration card and priority in the social security scheme.

Similar movement was gathering momentum in Sangli district in southern Maharashtra. The movement had its origin during the period when there was a severe drought in 1972. In 1983, an organisation called *Stree Mukti Sangharsh Chawwal* was formed to render concerted attention on prob-

lems of women. By then they had realised that most of the women working on relief operations were those deserted by their husbands. Many of them were ill-treated also. In September 1987 a conference of deserted women was held at Vita. Demands raised in the Vita conference were similar to those raised in Sangamner conference which we have mentioned earlier.

In the course of their campaigning, the activists also noticed that desertion is not confined to Hindu households alone. There were a lot of Muslim women who were either distressed or divorced (*talque pidit*). In Dhule, leadership was provided by Vijaya Chowk through Mahila Samajwadi Sabha. In Nasik, the lead was taken by the Mahila Hakka Savrakshak Samiti (MHSS). The MHSS started by the activists of the Rashtra Seva Dal was initially busy in solving the cases of family distress. It was during these efforts, they came to know about the gravity of situation caused by the desertion. Experience of the Nasik activists is revealing on many counts. The MHSS organised several meetings, *shibirs*, awareness camps and also *Jagruti Yatras* in the villages and towns. They have now launched a new project called *Project Kalyani* to help women in distress.

In Poona city, Vidya Bal and others organised the conference of single women in January 1989 and the initiative was taken by the Nari Samata Manch (NSM). This conference of the *APARAJITA* was attended by some 230 women and included women from diverse categories like divorcees, deserted, unmarried, widows, etc. Some one-third of them came from the villages. In Bombay, Mahila Dakshata Samiti (MDS) and Samajwadi Mahila Sabha (SMS) were two prominent organisations associated with this issue of desertion and distress.

In concluding part, the authors discuss the key nuances of the issue of desertion and while doing this they attempt to look back at the signposts of the women's movement. This exercise is extremely rewarding as it tries to place the movement in a broader perspective on change and transformation. Here they also look into historical dimensions of the problem and take cognizance of such factors as urbanisation and industrialisation; pressures on and slow dissolution of joint family system; rural pauperisation and consequent migration of poorer strata of Indian society and relative insecurities in the urban industrial centres for the migrant, uprooted households. This effort to link the problem of desertion with wider socio-economic and political forces is indeed praiseworthy.

The authors have brought out in bold relief the

problems faced by a deserted woman. These problems cover: (1) absence of immediate shelter, even a temporary shelter; (2) financial insecurity; (3) burden of child rearing; (4) emotional torture coupled with a sense of stigma attached to her person; (5) perpetuation of stigmatised existence; even her daughters cannot find suitable grooms; and (6) hostile social environment if a deserted woman thinks of marrying again. This condition amply reveals the severity of barriers the society has imposed on the women in general and deserted women in particular.

### Lessons to Learn

This book indeed explodes the myths about the economic growth and its contribution to social justice and sanity. It also lays bare the double-facedness of the state, bureaucracy and its legal instrumentalities.

This also brings in sharper focus the challenges and their enormity in the current environment, where the civil society is in turmoil and women's issues are relegated to backyard of policy design and implementation.

This document also supports an agenda for a deeper critique of society, economy and religion. This would need greater collaboration between those with a grounding in theory and those in praxis.

This narrative also brings to the fore another interesting dimension; and that relates to strengths and also limitations of activists in their battles against social, political and also cultural hegemony. This battle is not easy to fight, it can be long and protracted. Also the path of liberation movement is strewn with enormous difficulties.

The crisis can take place at any level: (i) in the domain of conceptualisation and comprehension on the part of the activists and the NGOs; (ii) the strengths or capacities of the victim population itself; (iii) preparedness of the state to allocate the space for the issue and the groups which demand it, knowing the skills of the former to coopt and derail the movement at its weakest links; and above all (iv) the social consciousness of civil institutions like family, caste and community which themselves constitute power domains and which throughout history have used the women's self and sexuality for retention of patriarchy.

This book indeed brings together competently some crucial facets and opens up the terrain for further reflections and debate on the theory and praxis of feminism and feminist movement in India. And therein lies the merit of this volume.



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# "Poisoned Bread" : An Anthology of Dalit Writing A Critical Reading

L.S. Deshpande\*

## Introduction

"POISONED BREAD" (1992) is an anthology of Dalit writing — samples of poetry, prose and criticism all put together, translated from Marathi into English by various translators, edited by Arjun Dangle, and published by the Orient Longman, Bombay.

The selection comprises poems, autobiographical extracts, short stories, and, finally, essays and speeches. The present article is a modest attempt to define, for the benefit of the non-Marathi readers, the concept of Dalit Literature, discussing its nature and function, and, while doing so, determine its *raison to etre* and the role it has played, or aims at playing, ever since its origin in widening the horizons of Modern Marathi Literature.

## Dr. Ambedkar : Pioneer of Dalit Literature

We aren't going to the Chavadar Lake (at Mahad, a small town in Western Maharashtra) merely to drink its water. We're going to the Lake to assert that we, too, are human beings like others.<sup>1</sup>

These are the words (of course, in their English translation) with which Ambedkar launched what was not just a *Satyagraha*, a peaceful resistance, but a struggle for equality of all, including the down-trodden or the outcastes and the *adivasis* or the aboriginals in India. The day, the 25th of December, 1927, is thus historic in that it is considered a watershed in the history of the Dalit movement: the *Manusmriti*, the ancient Hindu Code of laws, received by the caste-Hindus as sacred, dearer-than-life, god-gifted scriptural text in terms not only of the orthodox religious tradition but also of socio-cultural values was set to fire there on the day to give a jolt to the orthodoxy-ridden Hindu consciousness. It was one more attempt, long after the Buddha's, at giving a death-blow to the Hindu hierarchical social structure based on the age-old institution called the *Chaturvarnya* i.e. the four-tiered social system. It was a symbolic act of protest on the part of the one who is to the Dalits what Martin

Luther King has been to the Blacks — an emancipator on his way to eradicate untouchability, that is, a sign of slavery once and for all. It heralded the beginning of a new revolutionary era for the Dalits; it taught them to stake their very existence in an untiring, ceaseless strife for social equality and justice and, even after all these long lingering years of independence, the problem remains the same, though not so acute as in the pre-independence days.

Another event. It is as revolutionary as the Chavadar Lake *satyagraha* and may perhaps be seen as a sequel to it but an unfortunate one for the Hindu hegemony. The 14th October offers an occasion for rejoicings, a day of rebirth, for the teeming down-trodden millions of Maharashtra every year. It marks and commemorates Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism on that day in 1956. Apart from sounding a death-knell to the caste-ridden Hindu orthodoxy, it has brought a silent, peaceful revolution in the socio-cultural life of the Dalits, particularly in Maharashtra, by implanting in their minds a new consciousness.

## Dalit Literature : Its Origin

The origins of Dalit Literature may be traced way back in the 1960's to a popular urge for an overall socio-cultural change through their movement, an organized struggle for social justice, for equality of status and opportunities in all walks of life. The three influences, rather guiding forces, that inspired the phenomenal emergence of Dalit literature on the Marathi literary scene are, obviously enough, Mahatma Phule, Babasaheb Ambedkar and Buddhism — all rationalistic to the core, each striving for liberation through rejection of tradition, and protest or revolt against the Hindu hegemony. "Unite, educate, and agitate" was Ambedkar's message to the Dalits.

## First Dalit Literary Conference

Siddhartha Sahitya Sangha (1950), later known as Maharashtra Dalit Sahitya Sangha, initiated the process of Dalit Literature as a movement and convened its first literary conference in 1958 in Bombay which inspired Dalit writers to take upon themselves the missionary task of spreading Am-

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bedkar's message, or what is of late being called Ambedkarism, in every nook and corner of Maharashtra. One of the resolutions enacted at the conference seeks to define Dalit literature as that written by the Dalits themselves and also that written by others about the Dalits in Marathi<sup>2</sup>. The resolution further emphasizes that it needs to be recognised as a distinct entity, separate from the mainstream of Marathi literature. The term "Dalit" denotes "downtrodden", but here in the context it does not simply mean the literature of the downtrodden; it projects what is called the Dalit consciousness, a kind of consciousness Ambedkar inspired or aimed at instilling in the minds of his followers and fellow-men through his writings, speeches, undertakings, and movements. To the surprise of all those who have mute reservations of various sorts in their minds about the Dalit movement as such, the conference was inaugurated by Lokashahir Anna Bhau Sathe, one who neither belonged to the erstwhile Mahar community nor was a neoconvert to Buddhism.

#### *A Literary Movement*

The beginnings of Dalit literature run parallel to the emergence of the Little Magazines Movement in Marathi — the Angry Young Man syndrome and Existential Philosophy being their common ground. It shares its identity, and some of its agony and suffering, too, with the Black Literature. Exploitation, more of cultural than of social or economic nature, lies at its core. It is the literature of "the poorest and the lowliest and the lost", an untold story of the people who are denied even simple, ordinary humanity.

The real beginning, however, was made by the pioneering efforts of Dr. M.N. Wankhade, Professor of English accredited just then with a Ph.D. on the Black Literature by an American University, under whose inspiring leadership and enlightened guidance Dalit Literature began to emerge as a powerful literary movement in Marathi in 1967. *Asmitadarsha*, which Dr. Wankhade founded, is not just a journal of Dalit writing in Marathi, but an institution on whose platform all kinds of intellectual, cultural, and literary discourse were intended to take place. Like the Black Writers in America, Dalit writers here also rose in rebellion against the establishment. The writing has, all through these years, come down to us as the literature of protest, of revolt. Dalit writers were not just themselves in the thick of the fight; there were others also with them; to enlist only a few names, there were critics such as G.B.

Sardar, R.G. Jadhav, W.L. Kulkarni, D.K. Bedekar and Sharachchandra Muktibodh, and the editors of the Marathi daily newspapers such as *Maratha* and *Marathwada*, and also those of the Marathi journals such as *Pratishthan*, *Sadhana*, *Samaj Prabodhan Patrika*, and *Magova*.

#### **Dalit Literature: A Literature of Social Commitment**

Dalit Literature does not present, as it is supposed to, just a sideview of the Modern Marathi Literature; it is not, again, just "modern" or "new" but is essentially "modernist" in terms of sensibility, experience and expression. It may be further argued that although it claims to stand apart in its own right from the mainstream of Marathi Literature, it has grown, through these two decades, to its full stature and has proved to be absolutely vital to its very being. It has rid its readers of their personal complexes and inhibitions and class prejudices. It breathes freedom for both writers and readers. It has its own creed, its own convictions. Dalit Literature is, thus, a literature of social commitment.

#### *A Voice of Freedom*

Whether one likes it or not, Dalit writers view "the established literature of India" as "Hindu Literature" and claim their literature to be considered "humanist literature" and "in the tradition of great literature of the world."<sup>3</sup> Freedom is its breath, and suffering its life. These find their best expression, particularly in poetry and autobiographical writing. What the Dalit writers voice is not just want of equality or justice, but a deep cultural void which they face both as human beings and writers, the state of abject poverty and deprivation to which they are reduced, and depravity and indignity into which they are thrown. The protagonist is usually projected as a rebel "standing up against subjugation, humiliation and atrocities" and can also be seen, sometimes, as "singing intoxicatedly of the dawn of a new life."<sup>4</sup>

#### *A Literature of Protest*

Dalit Literature is thus a product of new consciousness, new awareness. The fact explains to us why and how Dalit Literature owes its origin to Ambedkar's ideology and idealism. It is characterized by protest. It signifies a revolt against the tradition that prevailed to persecute the Dalit for centuries in the socio-cultural life of India. They have overthrown the dominance of the so called middle class values and standards through their literature in terms of linguistic idiom and literary criteria. In

case there is a choice between truthfulness and elegance, for example, they choose to be truthful rather than elegant and that, too, at times even at the cost of decency. Their writing is intentionally anti-romantic and inherently sociological in that they have a social cause to uphold, a social responsibility to fulfil.

#### *Social Realism and New Morality*

A Dalit work is necessarily dictated and controlled by its author's consciousness and vision in its projection of social reality. It is not fictive but real in its substance. It is as much a social document as an imaginative reconstruction of the truth about their life. It sustains itself on liberal, rationalistic, humanitarian ideology and condemns violence and exploitation in all their ugly manifestations. It imbibes, and also thrives on, what is called new morality. It is societal, and not individual, in character. It is literature as much of love and compassion as of protest and revolt. The stunning, heart-rending traumatic experiences it treats shake the readers' consciousness, destroy their fake sense of self-assurance and self-complacency, and finally bring them out of their ivory tower existence. It wounds their pride but heals their wounds. It is at once terrifying and soothing in its impact. Hence it is, in one word, cathartic in its effect.

#### *Dalit Poetry : Two Specimens*

A Dalit poem is unique in that it builds its structural pattern out of Dalit sensibility. It is unusual, exceptional in terms of its experience and expression — something hitherto unknown in the whole realm of Marathi poetry. Isolation, alienation, protest, revolt, struggle for survival, freedom from all sorts of bondage and exploitation, a feeling of apathy, estrangement and uprootedness, a search for new identity, and a longing for human dignity. It is rebellious in spirit, but compassionate in tone. It is as empathetic as evocative and, as such, addresses itself to the reader in terms of images that form the very texture of their verses.

#### *Namdeo Dhasal's "Hunger"*

Of all the poems, Namdeo Dhasal's *Hunger* is remarkable in that it is a piece of orchestration, where meaning is born out of its musical pattern. It is an example of what they call "pure poetry", one imbued with miraculous effects. Its theme is: Only those who have experienced such self-consuming, other-inflicted hunger know what it means, how painful and incapacitating the state is. Hunger is seen here as a multiplex poetic reality. The poem is its author's *tour de force*.

See how poetically the poet apostrophises hunger in positive terms, saying

*"Hunger, say yes to our dreams.  
Don't snuff out the orphan huts upon the shore.  
We'll see later  
The gold-threaded struggle  
between the snail of pain  
and the sea".*

The poet makes us listen to "the music in pain" and is himself grateful to the pain for its music, but then asks himself a poignant question :

*"If we have not made ourselves a tidy life,  
what right do we have to quarrel with the flowers?"*

Now, it is being presented as calamitous — an antagonistic force to fight against. The poet's attitude towards it is, nevertheless, ambivalent. It is kept deliberately frivolous despite all seriousness. It is like a dormant volcano, in fact. The poet says :

*Here's our manhood before you now.  
Let's see who wins this round -  
You or we?*

but, finally bursts out in quite frank, outspoken terms :

*Then we will screw  
seventeen generations of you,  
Hunger, you and your mother ....*

It is really surprising that hunger can be envisioned in such exquisite terms. Like Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, it takes the reader out in a world of fantasy but only for the time being and, then, brings him back to the world of reality.

#### *Hira Bansode's "Yashodhara"*

Equally remarkable is the other poem, *Yashodhara* by Hira Bansode. The poetess compares Yashodhara, the darling of her heart, to "a dream of sharp pain, lifelong sorrow". In her intensely passionate lyrical outburst, she confesses to her guilt-ridden, saying

*"I don't have the audacity to look to you."*

The contrast is glaring in the lines that follow :

*"We were brightened by Buddha's light,  
but you absorbed the dark."*

Each line of the poem runs on to another, and, in the process, flashes this image or that, e.g. "Tender sky" is what comes to Yashodhara "for refuge", or again, "the pained stars shed tears" at her grief and solitariness. The poetess's heart is moved as she

witnesses Yashodhara's "matchless beauty" "dimming like twilight" at her estrangement from her loving husband, Gautama. Then comes the final master-stroke, when she says :

"Listening to your silent sighs,  
I feel the promise of heavenly happiness."

The poem's success consists in the externalization of the author's mind and consciousness. The dramatic sweep with which the lines move carries the poem through and achieves its marvellous effects. Mark the apparent simplicity of the following lines and their great hidden power :

You would have remembered,  
while your life slipped by,  
that last kiss of Siddhartha's final farewell,  
those tender lips.

And the pithy line that follows — see how compact it is — dwells on Siddhartha's achievement :

"He went, he conquered, he shone."

Juxtaposed with the songs of Buddha's triumph are Yashodhara's femininity, her tearful eyes, and her utter helplessness. The poetess feels sad and is, further, stunned at history's silence about the great story of Yashodhara's sacrifice. Neither an epic nor a *purana* nor even a single Buddhist *vihara* could accord her a place as if she did not deserve to be reckoned at all. The poetess's heart is filled with shame at all this. However, in the concluding lines of the poem, she is seen giving a twist to the very idea on which she has built her poetic mosaic. She finds herself re-assured, with a pleasant surprise, at the glimpse of Yashodhara's "beautiful face" which is fondly found hidden nowhere else than in the small space "between (or beneath?) the closed eyelids of Siddhartha."

### The Dalit Literary Scene

One of the most salient features of Dalit writing is the presence "felt" in it of a highly conspicuous, individualized sensibility. All Dalit writers partake of it and it distinguishes them from each other.

Baburao Bagul may be said to be the pioneer of Dalit short story, his two short stories — *Death Is Becoming Cheap* and *When I Had Concealed My Caste*— have been immensely popular and are considered milestones in the history of modern Marathi short story. Annabhau Sathé and Shankarrao Kharat are the notable names of the short story writers in the older generation, and Waman Howai, Arjun Dangle, Yogiraj Waghmare, Bhimrao Shir-

wale, Avinash Dolas, and others in the younger generation.

The phenomenal rise of autobiographical writing marks the advent of Dalit literature in Marathi. The new form called *Atmakatha* (My Story) had been so deftly handled by the writers in the 1970's that it took the Marathi reading public by storm. Daya Pawar's *Baluta* (The Contract), P.J. Sonkamble's *Atharaniche Pakshi* (The Birds of Memory), Laxman Mane's *Upara* (The Stranger), Sharankumar Limbale's *Akkarmashi* (The Bastard) have all won critics' acclaim soon after their publication. Malika Amar Sheikh's *Mala Uddhvasta Whayachay* (I Want to Destroy Myself) is, at once, a Dalit and feminist piece of autobiographical writing.

Among the leading Dalit poets, one has to name Narayan Surve, Namdeo Dhasal, Yashwant Manohar, Keshav Meshram, Tryambak Sapkal, Waman Nimbalkar, Arun Kamble, Prakash Jadhav, Chokha Kamble, Bhagwan Sawai, Hira Bansode, Jyoti Lanjewar, etc. Most of these have been translated into languages within India and outside it.

Surprisingly enough, the anthology excludes the form drama, despite the existence of Dalit theatre. There are two well known playwrights, who, by their one-act and full-length plays, have contributed to Dalit theatre. One is Premanand Gajvi and the other Datta Bhagat. The former became popular with his one-act play *Ghotbhar Pani* (Just a Gulp of Water) and the latter with his *Awarta* (Recurrence).

What is remarkable about these Dalit writers is that they tend to achieve a harmonious admixture of the different kinds of writing and, in consequence, their stories are full of poems, and their poems full of stories. The use of intermittent lyricism characterizes their narrative technique, as it does with James Joyce in the *Dubliners*, aiming at disrobing the reality of their ghastly existence and allowing it further to glitter in all its nakedness. In short, it is intended to fulfil the same objective as ironic detachment does in T.S. Eliot or in James Joyce, again, for that matter. In effect, it compels the non-Dalit reader to get on to the confession-box and acquiesce his share of the ancient guilt so as to unburden himself of it, to come up, as though it were, with a sense of relief. It seeks, thus, to create in him a kind of consciousness that will, by invoking his sense of humanity, ultimately impel him to empathise with it.

### Dalit Literature : The Critical Scene

There is a sad dearth of literary criticism in



Dalit Literature — the reason being want of willingness on the part of Dalit intellectuals for self-analysis and self-appraisal. Nevertheless, there are a few Dalit critics who have expounded the concept of Dalit literature, brought out its nature and function, and assigned to it a role to play. The chief among them are M.N. Wankhade, Janardan Waghmare, Yashwant Manohar, Keshav Meshram, Gangadhar Pantawane and Raosaheb Kasbe. Very much like the Angry Young Men of the 1950's, the Marxist and the Existential writers of the 1960's in Europe, Dalit writers, too, have a sound philosophic rationale behind their creative endeavours. The Dalit critics' plea for evolving new, separate literary criteria to evaluate the validity of the Dalit works in the light of their special, characteristic vision, emerging from their newly discovered identity and newly acquired value system may be found justified by the example that when the Marxists or the Absurdist needed, for the proper assessment of their works, some new norms or standards, the critics belonging to those schools could come forward pleading for the establishment of their separate, respective critical jargon and aesthetic criteria.

#### *Dalit Literature Vs. Art for Art's Sake*

In the history of Marathi literary criticism, there are quite a large number of critics who vehemently uphold the claims of "art for art's sake" with all the ramifications implicit in the approach. But Raosaheb Kasbe, an eminent socio-political scientist and Dalit critic, finds no dichotomy between life and literature and seeks to resolve the controversy by supporting his argument with a poignant critical remark from, perhaps, the greatest African poet Leopold Senghor : "The division between art and life out of which such a concept comes does not exist there."<sup>5</sup> Asked by V.S. Naipaul in a long-sought-after interview with Namdeo Dhasal whether he was more a poet than a politician, the latter replied in these sharp words :

*The roles are not separate. I am against this caste system. I express it in my politics and in my poems. Poetry is a political act. Politics is part of my poetry.*<sup>6</sup>

The poet's commitment is thus complete and needs no further comment.

#### *A Prospective Third Force*

Among Dalit writers we come across two principal forces in operation. One, those who, even after having squared fairly with Ambedkar's ideology, remain committed to Marxian mode of thinking,

e.g. Bagul, Surve and Dhasal, and the other, those who owe almost religious allegiance to all that Ambedkar said and stood for. To this class belongs almost the whole train of Dalit writers excepting the ones just mentioned above. To add, there is the third force also, a feeble one but of vital significance : it represents a liberal, democratic and progressive mode of thinking. The members of the class are committed to intellectual pursuit and scientific temper, e.g. M.N. Wankhade, G.B. Sardar, Janardan Waghmare, Yashwant Manohar, R.G. Jadhav, Bhaskar Bhole, Raosaheb Kasbe, etc.

#### *A Two-pronged Approach*

The pioneers of Dalit literary criticism, referred to just above, insist both on the readers and the writers to adopt a two-pronged approach to Dalit literature : (i) A Dalit writer writes with a sense of responsibility that inheres in his social consciousness; his writing aims at being essentially 'meaningful' and is, hence, 'optimistic' and 'not depressing' at a surface, personal level despite its treatment of the horrid reality in terms of anguish and pain, misery and plight. (ii) He perceives and makes others perceive "what man has made of man" and urges upon himself and others to re-affirm their faith in what Bagul believes to be a "just revolution"<sup>7</sup> that will pave way for the oneness of man at a deep, universal level. Citing lines from a poem by Mayakovsky, Wankhade dreams to have "a new form of art" that will "pull the republic out of the mud"<sup>8</sup>. And that precisely is the function of Dalit literature and the role it has taken upon itself to play. A Dalit writer has the entire tradition of Jatak-Katha, folk-literature, Kabir, Tukaram (as rebel poets and not as saint-poets), such Existentialists as Sartre and Camus, the Black writers, the Latin American and African writers, and the modern World Classics to fall back upon. Writing for him is an ordeal to pass through. Wankhade reminds one of Camus's words :

*"There is no peace for the artist other than what he finds in the heart of combat."*<sup>9</sup>

#### References

1. Arjun Dangle (ed.) *Poisoned Bread*, Bombay, Orient Longman, 1992, p. 225.
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3. *ibid.*, p. 289.
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5. *ibid.*, p. 292.
6. V.S. Naipaul, *India : A Million Mutinies Now*, London, Penguin Books, 1992 p. 116
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**REGISTRAR**

# The Facets of Educational Change

J.S. Rajput\*

The title attracted my attention. I picked up the volume *The New Meaning of Educational Change*, by Michael G. Fullan, with Stiegelbauer (Cassell Educational Limited, London, 1991) from amongst the several lying on the table of a scholar-bureaucrat who finds time to read, write and create. While turning the pages casually, I got stuck up on first paragraph of Chapter 16 (p. 345). I read this paragraph few times without going over to the next. I borrowed the book for a few days.

"The shame of educational change is the squandering of good intentions and the waste of resources in light of personal and societal needs of great human consequence. The capacity to bring about change and the capacity to bring about improvement are two different matters. Change is everywhere, progress is not. The more things change the more they remain the same, if we do not learn our lessons that a different mind-and action-set is required."

Each sentence quoted above provided sufficient motivation to me to go through *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. As I began from the Preface onwards, my interest grew, particularly in view of my long association with teaching at various stages of education and more than 4 years' stint with the educational policy formulation and implementation in the areas of elementary education, teacher education and alternative strategies in basic education.

In India, we have formulated and reformulated educational policies on several occasions, the last being in mid-1992. The basic objective has been to ensure enhanced efficiency of the educational system, improvement in the quality and relevance of education. In 1986 and 1992, Programme of Action documents were developed, delineating the strategies for implementation of the policies. These, in fact, were the detailed guidelines for effecting educational change at each stage of education; from pre-primary to higher education. These dealt with educational management, administration, decen-

tralisation, community involvement, professional growth of teachers and teacher educators, apart from the pedagogical aspects of content and process and other areas. Going through these, one gets a picture of what is envisaged to achieve and how the educational change, as perceived, could actually be translated into practical realities within the classrooms and by the teachers.

I, as such, was delighted to find a volume which attempts to analyse, in totality, the process of educational change in all its dimensions, as is outlined in the first paragraph of the Preface :

"The issue of central interest in this book is not how many new policies have been approved or how many restructuring efforts are being undertaken, but rather what has actually changed in practice — if anything — as a result of our efforts. Has the cumulative effect of attempted reform been positive, or neutral or are we losing ground? How do we know when change is worthwhile ? What can teachers, administrators, parents, or policy-makers do when they know that something is desperately wrong in our schools? Can rejecting a proposed educational program be more progressive than accepting it? Why are we so often unclear and ambivalent about new ways of doing things?"

I noted early that most of the material has been drawn from North American sources (P.xiii). However, Fullan also explicitly states its relevance in the general context, 'any discussion with those involved in educational innovation and reform in other countries quickly reveals that the nature of problems and many of the principles of success and failure have a great deal in common'. Going through the volume, I have noted that most of the discussions and inferences are, in fact, of real relevance in our situation also.

The educational change has many dimensions. In India, we have experiences of more than four decades after Independence and these have provided significant learning experiences to policy planners, educational administrators and academic functionaries. It is now well realized that increasing the number of institutions at any level does not necessarily ensure equality of opportunity or of

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access. It has also been learnt that in view of the socio-economic and cultural diversities coupled with regional variations, it is not possible to follow any single strategy or approach to achieve perceptible and effective change in the educational scenario. In what follows, the discussion will be confined to the school education aspects only.

### **The Sources of Educational Change**

Before attempting to identify the meaning and components of the change, Fullan has taken up discussion on two very significant aspects, 'what are schools for' and 'what is school reform for'. He has raised the basic questions; What are the schools supposed to do? Does educational change help do it? What are the prospects for improvement? It is these three questions which run through the entire book. In fact, in any educational policy formulation these three questions remain omnipresent in practically every statement and formulation. Answers to none of these questions are simple. At the same time, pose these to any teacher, parent or educational functionary, he would be willing to respond with confidence. The schools are supposed to serve two major purposes: to educate students in academic or cognitive skills and knowledge and also in development of individual and social skills and knowledge necessary to become a useful adult member of the community and society. Whether the schools are really performing the tasks stated in these terms or in any other alternative formulation could be a measure of the extent of change in the educational system through the changes in the individual learners. Everyone desires that the schools should perform these functions thoroughly. Practically everyone would be willing to testify that this is not being so, anywhere!

The efficiency of the educational systems and of the functioning of the schools are major concerns of parents and the community. It would be unfair to say that systems themselves do not attempt to increase their efficacy. However, the question remains as to how the same could be enhanced. Why are we always talking of educational reforms? An efficient teaching-learning system should ensure a better quality of life of the individual and consequently the society. This is one of the basic premises particularly in the context of current initiatives towards universalisation of elementary education in developing countries. The relationship between educational change and societal change needs to be consistently studied and analysed. There are certainly limits to the relationship between these two

sectors. Fullan finds that 'educational reform is no substitute for societal reform'. In India, the socio-cultural factors deeply affect the very process of educational expansion. As such the mutual relationship, particularly the mutually supportive role, needs to be critically visualized and incisively perceived. It has also been a global experience that the processes of planned educational change turn out to be much more complex to the initial anticipations. It is also a fact that when a reform is implemented with commitment and devotion, it provides much more enlightenment and learning than what was expected to be achieved initially. In the fast changing social norms of today, it is imperative to comprehend; to the possible extent; the dynamics of the proposed change. The relationship of education to various complex social and development issues has to be understood in simple terms. How this can be done is one of the major tasks in the process of educational change.

While discussing the sources of educational change, the author has attempted to highlight the problem of meaning in educational change. The real worth of particular policies or innovations cannot be taken for granted as it is not possible to be sure about the actual extent of implementation or the real outcomes of proposed changes. As such, the magnitude of the change or the innovation could be gauged pragmatically only in due course. However, the variety of innovations taking place in the environment provide necessary inputs in forging ahead and conceptualizing the potentialities of the change. It could also be pointed out that there is no single change, reform or innovation which could be taken as a master concept to provide a panacea for all ills. It is acknowledged that most changes since the turn of the century, pertain to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of what is currently done "without disturbing the basic organisational features, without substantially altering the way that children and adults perform their roles" (p. 29). The other type of changes which sought to alter the fundamental ways in which organisations are put together, including new goals, structures and roles, have largely failed. The type of changes that should receive focal attention could depend upon the socio-political and educational scenario of a particular country.

In India, the present concern could definitely be the first type of changes though professionals may not agree to limit their domain at any stage. The meaning of educational change could be a matter of prolonged debate. There could be an academician's



approach and also an alternative approach which could be called a school teacher's approach. It might be easier to understand 'what is a change in practice' (p. 37). Educational change is never a single entity even if the analysis is kept at the simplest level of a classroom innovation. It is always multi-dimensional. Three broad area classifications have been attempted : (i) the possible use of new or revised materials (direct instructional resources such as curriculum materials or technologies), (ii) the possible use of new teaching approaches (i.e. new teaching strategies or activities), and (iii) the possible alteration of beliefs (e.g. pedagogical assumptions and theories underlying particular new policies or programs).

One could easily quote a number of innovations at the policy level and at the level of material development, training strategies and improvement of school environment in India. The innovations aimed at changing the scenario and the system have been broadly carried out by the governments and by voluntary agencies. The voluntary action has its plus points in terms of flexibility and openness to new ideas and in making midterm corrections, apart from the commitment of the individuals. The government systems have the advantage of infrastructures and resources. The complexity of the situation becomes evident when the positive and tangible outcomes of one system are not accepted and assimilated by the other on a purely objective and professional basis. An effective coordination of the two could also respond to: what changes could be implemented and how these need to be implemented? One observes that this is the problem not only in the Indian context but also in the North American context.

Most of the change processes in education could be classified into three major phases. The first would be the process that leads up to and includes a decision to adopt or proceed with a particular innovation. This could be levelled initiation, mobilisation or adoption. The second would be the field level implementation and assessment. This amounts to putting an idea or reform into practice (p. 48). The last phase would consist of continuation, incorporation, routinisation or institutionalisation. For future references, this should be the most significant component. These are generally accepted steps followed by innovators. Unfortunately, not all of such initiatives really reach the second or third stage.

Efforts to link the content and curriculum of

basic education to the learners' needs and societal expectations were initiated in India much prior to the Independence. Gandhiji and his colleagues perceived the *buniyadi talim* as most relevant not only for taking education to all children but also from the point of view of its utility to the society. Unfortunately, in the post-independence era, we were overwhelmed by the international trends in curriculum development. In the process, somewhere the component of relevance did not get adequate focus and attention. This also represents the general trend which follows innovative practices everywhere. The initial enthusiasm dies down over the years and the outcomes become a thing of the past rather too early. It would not be difficult to locate individuals who would drift from one initiative to another. The most useful lesson that one can learn in the area of innovation is to ensure that positive outcomes are internalised by the larger systems, the utility aspect is taken note of at each stage and the relevance of the innovation is not lost sight of. The absorption capacity of the existing school system towards new inputs, whether in the shape of policies or projects or innovations, is, unfortunately limited. There are instances where the percentage of funds utilisation is much below the expectations. It is indeed a ridiculous situation that while on the one hand we are starved of funds, on the other hand, we are not able to ensure appropriate utilisation of the same. It has been our experience that even in situations where sufficient resources are available, adequate motivation and readiness has been generated and relevance established, the large scale changes are hampered by bureaucratic procedures and inflexible rigidities of the systems. This is a major issue in development of education in India.

### The Teachers and Head Teachers

The role of teachers in change has been discussed in depth and detail. The chapter on teachers begins with a quotation (117) :

"If a new program works, teachers get little of the credit; if it fails, they get most of the blame."

The veracity of the above statement is not confined to geographical borders. It is also well understood that the school improvement occurs only when teachers are willing partners in the same. Fullan has quoted research evidence which has established that school improvement occurred when (i) teachers engaged in frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete talk about teaching practice; (ii) teachers and administrators frequently observed and provided feedback to each other, developing a

“shared language” for teaching strategies and needs; and (iii) teachers and administrators planned, designed, and evaluated teaching materials and practices together. It is obvious that we in India are deficient on all the points mentioned in this study. Some of the recent policy initiatives have attempted to change the major components which could lead to school improvement. These are providing necessary infrastructural support in terms of buildings and related facilities in primary schools. Teaching-learning materials have also been made available to more than half a million schools in the country. District level resource centres for teacher education, both pre-service and in-service, are also being established. It has been stipulated in policy documents that supervisory systems of school education should, in fact, be transformed into academic support systems. However, we are aware that much needs to be done and achieved on these aspects. The factors related to teachers in respect of school improvement could really provide some thought-provoking ideas.

In another study (p. 119) on ‘what teachers do and think’, one finds some very relevant outcomes.

- \* Teacher training does not equip teachers for realities of the classroom.
- \* The cellular organisation of the schools means that teachers struggle with their problems and anxieties privately.
- \* Teachers do not develop a common technical culture because of norms of not sharing, observing and discussing each other’s work.
- \* Help from fellow teachers, administrators and specialists is not frequent.
- \* Teachers are often unsure of their contributions and achievements.
- \* The teacher has little influence or involvement in school-wide and other extra classroom matters.

The situation of school which pay little attention towards initiatives and efforts in improving quality has been summarized in another research finding (p. 123).

“Little attachment to anything or anybody. Teachers seemed more concerned with their own identity than a sense of shared community. Teachers learned about the nature of their work randomly, not deliberately, tending to follow their individual instincts. Without shared gov-

ernance, particularly in managing student conduct, the absolute number of students who claimed teachers’ attention seemed greater.... teachers talked of frustration, failure, tedium and managed to transfer those attributes to the students about whom they complained.”

One would like to share Fullan’s perception regarding how creative teachers should really be making their contributions. He sees teachers and others working in small groups interacting frequently in the course of planning, testing new ideas, attempting to solve different problems, assessing effectiveness, etc. In such an interaction, giving and receiving advice and help would be the natural order of things. What better description could one envisage?

Relationship of the change and the role of the heads of schools has also been critically analysed. The Principals and Head Masters would need autonomy and support. This would imply how the supervisors and managers really treat Head Masters. It would also be essential to see the extent to which the Principals are able to express themselves before their seniors and superiors and how much of this receives due consideration. The Principals have to become directly involved in the process of change and motivation. They themselves have to be prepared for a sustained interest in the process of change. Successful Principals, in another study, were found to have used six broad strategies (p. 160):

- \* Strengthened the school’s (improvement) culture;
- \* Used a variety of bureaucratic mechanisms to stimulate and reinforce cultural change;
- \* Fostered staff development;
- \* Engaged in direct and frequent communication about cultural norms, values and belief;
- \* Shared power and responsibility with others; and
- \* Used symbols to express cultural values

It may be relevant to know what makes a Principal great (p. 161).

“Great principals do not pluck their acumen and resourcefulness straight out of the air. In our data, successful schools weren’t led by philosopher kings with supreme character and unerring method, but by a steady accumulation

of common wisdom and hope distilled from vibrant, shared experience both with teacher leaders in schools and colleagues district wide."

The principals and the teachers have to work together in a relationship cemented by mutual respect and regard. In no other situation the change can really take place.

The discussions on district administrator, consultants, the parents and the community and the governments are rather more situation-specific and as such do not directly relate to the situations existing in India. This is as could be expected. The essential angle that emerges very explicitly from going through these chapters is the fact that need to ensure decentralisation of power, authority and decision-making is felt even in North America. The commonality with our situation, however, surfaces unfailingly — those who plead for the decentralisation at the highest level do not necessarily remain on the same wavelength when it comes to actual sharing of power and authority.

One simple example illustrates this situation more than anyone else. Over all these years, we have accepted that the school calendar should be regulated in accordance with the needs of local community. It should also take into account the social and cultural events and happenings in the area. Needless to say, such an adjustment would have helped the learners in rural areas on an unprecedented scale. It has been ascertained that nearly 92% of the children engaged in child labour are in the agricultural sector i.e. in rural India. Adjustment of the calendar, school timings and duration could probably have brought to schools a considerable number of these children. One is not aware of any situation where the formal school system has really adjusted its vacations, holidays and timings in consultation with the local community. They all scrupulously follow the patterns set forth from the State capital.

### The Potentialities

We have a chance before us. With Constitutional Amendments to strengthen the Panchayat Raj system and intentions to give the Panchayats considerable authority in imparting elementary education, the scenario is capable of a big change. A lot of caution and precautions are, however, necessary before one is overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of the expected magnitude of the change. The shape of the things has already started emerging before

us. The teacher organisations have started their agitations, protesting against community management of school education systems! The lack of mutual respect and confidence has penetrated to such an extent in our hearts that for smaller interests we are willing to overlook the larger imperatives.

One may talk of several inputs and ingredients in the context of educational change, the focus invariably shifts to teachers and teacher educators. The professional preparation of teachers is directly dependent upon how the teacher training institutions function and to what extent professional development of teacher educators has been ensured by the system. These aspects have been discussed with two fundamental assumptions.

- \* Teacher education, or teacher as learner, from day one, must be thought of as a career-long proposition. Teacher education or teacher development is a continuum of learning.
- \* Teacher development and school development must go hand in hand. You cannot have one without the other.

Several initiatives have been taken in India on both these aspects. The establishment of national resource centres like National Council of Educational Research and Training, National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration and the subsequent creation of State Councils of Educational Research and Training were aimed at improving teacher education and professional development of teacher educators contributing to other aspects of educational technology in terms of curriculum renewal, innovations and evaluation strategies and development of supportive teaching-learning materials. Recently, the district level resource centres in the form of District Institutes of Education and Training have been set up. Within a year or so, the present number of 350 should reach 400. This could easily be one of the biggest attempts in developing resource centres in teacher education.

All these institutions functioning at various levels will have to ascertain the reasons for dilution in the expected outcomes of training strategies and training programmes. In an entirely different scenario, these were analysed by Fullan (p. 316):

- \* One-shot workshops are widespread but are ineffective.
- \* Topics are frequently selected by people other than those for whom the in-service is intended.

- \* Follow-up support for ideas and practices introduced in in-service programs occurs in only a very small minority of cases.
- \* Follow-up evaluation occurs infrequently.
- \* In-service programs rarely address the individual needs and concerns.
- \* The majority of programs involve teachers from many different schools and/or school districts, but there is no recognition of the differential impact of positive and negative factors within the systems to which they must return.
- \* There is a profound lack of any conceptual basis in the planning and implementing of in-service programs that would ensure their effectiveness.

In the same breath, in one of the studies, 12 factors that acted as barriers to effective staff development were also identified.

- \* an inadequate theory of implementation, resulting in too little time for teachers and school leaders to plan for and learn new skills and practices;
- \* district tendencies toward faddism and quick-fix solutions;
- \* lack of sustained central office support and follow through;
- \* underfunding the project, or trying to do too much with too little support;
- \* attempting to manage the projects from the central office instead of developing school leadership and capacity;
- \* lack of technical assistance and other forms of intensive staff development;
- \* lack of awareness of the limitations of teacher and school administrator's knowledge about how to implement the project;
- \* the turnover of teachers in each school;
- \* too many competing demands or overload;
- \* failure to address the incompatibility between project requirements and existing organisational policies and structure;
- \* failure to understand and take into account site-specific differences among schools; and
- \* failure to clarify and negotiate the role relationships and partnerships involving the district and the local university.

Both the quotations above amply indicate that the professional development of teachers and teacher educators requires similar initiatives. In the context of life-long learning, teachers and teacher educators would definitely contribute not only towards professional upgradation but also to become role models. So much is expected of the teachers and one is always ready with a list of roles that they should perform. It is obligatory on the part of the system to ensure the enabling situation for the same.

Millions of children in this country are waiting educational change. So are the parents and the communities. In fact, the nation itself. We have before us our own outline of the possible change. "All change, including progress contains ambivalence and dilemmas because, when we set off on a journey to achieve significant change, we do not know in advance all the details of how to get there, or even what it is going to be like when we arrive" (p.345). What we need to focus upon is the preparedness for the change. The illiterates of twenty first century would know how to read and write but would not be aware of how to change, accept change and be partners in change. We have to keep their number to minimum.

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# Books Read and Unread

Girja Kumar\*

Since I am engaged in working on two books simultaneously, I must confess to an extensive reading of older literature. The adage that 'old is gold' has been confirmed once again by the act of personal perusal. It has been a voyage of discovery for me. I must have gone through about fifty books during last two years. Intellectually I have been enabled to garner a rich fare.

## Old is Gold

The real worth of a book is to be measured by its survival capabilities beyond a decade or so. By this test it shall be fruitful to judge the best novels of the year receiving the Booker award. So much excitement was generated in the literary world. Everyone worth his salt in literary terms seems to be obsessed with talking about the novel and its progenitor. The novel became the literary toast of the year. It was a purely temporary phenomenon. By next year the previous awardee would be consigned to dustbin. How many could recall the names of novels awarded the Booker prize during last two decades? The only exception seems to be Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*. It is a novel of classical proportions; there can be no doubt about it. It continues to be in the public eye, for other reasons than its merit. Salman Rushdie is in the eye of the storm, thanks to the *fatwa* of the Khomeini. History was a cruel judge and much more so where the mortality of books was concerned.

The universality of the theme, its social and intellectual relevance and its potential to add to the given fund of human knowledge and experience, besides its capacity to be pleasurable to its readers, determines the survival capabilities of a book. By the same test there are several books perused by me during last two years that have passed the test. Of all the books I have gone through in pursuit of my studies, I have the least hesitation in singling out Alain Danielou's *Hindu Polytheism* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964). It is to my utter loss that such a classic piece of scholarship escaped my notice during the last three decades. The fame of the book and reputation of the author is however confined to the

limited circle of Indologists. The neglect is to be explained by the disdain with which the pre- and post 'Midnight's Children' in India have treated religion. There has been a reaffirmation of the disdain in intellectual circles in post-Ayodhya India. Yet the fact remains that *Hindu Polytheism* has contemporary relevance for its catholic interpretation of the Indian tradition.

Alain Danielou is a French scholar who has spent the best part of his life in South India quietly studying the indigenous treatises in original Sanskrit. He brings to bear the French logical mind combined with passion and commitment to his work. No study of Indian tradition can be complete without reading his classic on Hinduism. He lets the facts speak for themselves. Take his understanding of Saivism: "This philosophy originally distinct from that of the Vedas belongs to another and earlier statum of Indian civilization, which was gradually assimilated by the conquering Aryans". Much more significant is his assertion that "Saivism had always been the religion of common people, for whom there was little place in the aristocratic Aryan fold" (p. 188). The other greater merit of the work lies in its simplicity combined with its infinite profundity. Take its definition of God, or Brahman ("the Immensity"), which is described "as the space-time-thought continuum, (as) the absolute and intimate stage in which are united assistance, the source of spatial form; consciousness or knowledge, the basis of thought; and limitless duration of eternity, the basis of experience or enjoyment".

## Kamasutra

Having moved to his native land, France, his enthusiasm and passion in the cause of Indian scholarship have not waned. He has now come out with another *tour de force* of scholarship. This year he has published an authentic edition of *Kamasutra* in Paris. It is presently available in the French language. All of us have been fed on the English translation of *Kamasutra* by Richard Burton. Not many of us are aware of the fact that it is an unauthenticated, incomplete and distorted version of Vatsayan's profound handywork. One must look forward to Alain Danielou's labour of love in English translation. Several myths about the Indian concept of Kama (the art of love and sexology) are likely to be

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demolished. A new interpretation of the Indian tradition is on the anvil. At the very least, Alain Danielou is due for *Padma Bhushan* or *Padma Vibhushan* award next time. By honouring the distinguished Frenchman, India shall be honouring itself and its great tradition.

I have talked of the qualities of a work published exactly thirty years ago in violation of the directive of the Editor of *University News*, with the current issue being strictly confined to favoured books published during last three years. Here it calls for a confession on my part. Being a self-confessed addict of books on lifelong basis, in addition to reading older literature, I have also continued my flirtation with the dose of a book-a-fortnight of recent books. At one time I used to imbibe a dose of book-a-week for my weekly review column for the newspaper. The latest fiction continues to be my great concern for very practical reasons. Contemporary fiction continues to be the truest reflection of human condition in our times.

### Current Fiction

There is however a contradiction in the situation. The nineteenth century produced the greatest fiction of all times. Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, for instance, is one of the greatest achievements of literature. While on the one hand, there is a profusion of fictional pieces in recent decades outnumbering the output of nineteenth century infinitely, the quality is another matter. The current times are distinguished for the superabundance of pulp literature. No wonder, one is hard put to singling out quality fiction that came out during the last three years. The quality of the best of the pieces is passable.

### A Suitable Boy

It is possible to single out two novels published during last three years that have given one much pleasure. One of them is by all reckoning *A Suitable Boy* by Vikram Seth. There are several things interesting about the novel. So are statistics very impressive about it. It contains 1349 pages and weighs 1.5 kilos, thus straining the physical resources of any normal human being. It is also said to be the largest one-volume novel in English language. While it is priced at Rs. 500/- in India, the English edition is a runaway bestseller at £ 20 (or Rs. 1100/-). Many persons must have bought it for its novelty value for reasons mentioned above, besides the hefty advance of Rs. 2.6 crores received by the author.

The novel has been a big hit in England, especially more so with the English critics. One critic has

called *A Suitable Boy* as "the most engrossing novel I have read in years. Seth's genius for characterisation — a lost art now a days allows him to bring into personal focus each strand — romantic, political, commercial, religious — of India's dizzying culture". Obviously it has to do great deal with the Raj nostalgia. Recall the immense popularity of Paul Scott's *Raj Quartet*. There is undoubtedly a soft corner for India in the very depths of the ex-colonial's subconscious. There is also a romantic aura about the past among the contemporary generation of Englishmen.

Undoubtedly, there have been exaggerated words of appreciation for the novel from several quarters. It has even been compared to Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in its Indian incarnation. Undoubtedly the strong point of the novel is its immense readability. It is extremely strong in narration. There are too many characters in the novel. All the strands are strongly held. It has all the qualities associated with the traditional novel. Vikram Seth thus swims against prevailing trends in the West with its emphasis on incoherence in narration and loose characterisation. The novelist is thus in line with 18th and 19th century traditions in the West, as well as the predominant trends in Indian languages today. In short, *A Suitable Boy* has a beginning, a middle and an end.

It is an excellent piece of craftsmanship but it is certainly not a great novel. There are very few universal characters that get to be etched upon your mind. There are acres and acres of rephrasing of political pronouncements, acclamations and chunks of legislative assembly debates. His descriptions are clinical. Vikram Seth operates like a surgeon wielding his knife effortlessly. There are few descriptions that are memorable. My personal favourite is his depiction of the Chamar Colony and the depiction of the processes in curing of leather. It is far from our intention to detract from the virtues that inhere in the piece of fiction. In nutshell the greatness of the novel lies in its complete accessibility, and, as if, everything were happening next door.

A note of caution needs however to be struck at this stage. Very high quality fiction is being written in several Indian languages. Prem Chand is extremely overrated, and so is Vikram Seth. They are lucky due to the propitious circumstances. Let them however not be denied the accolades coming their way. In this connection, I would like to mention a Marathi novel (now available in Hindi translation)

about the tragic life of Sambhaji, the son of Chattrapati Shivaji. It has been completely underrated because it is not available in English translation. I would rate it very high. It is one of the finest historical novels that I have read for a long time. Luck and circumstances play as much role in making a piece of fiction or a human being great.

### Ancient Rome

Another novel that has held my attention is *The First Man in Rome* by Colleen McCullough (Century, London, 1990). It is in a different class when compared to Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*. It is a piece of fiction of altogether different genre. *The First Man in Rome* is a historical novel about Rome. It has a remarkable sweep with all the action capsuled between 110 BC - 100 BC. Considerable amount of research must have gone into it, established by the fact that it has a glossary of terms and names spread over 120 pages in a large novel containing 1032 pages. It is not easy to read because it has too many characters. It has a vast compass, since the action moves quickly from Rome to Carthage, and then to Gaul and back. The description of ancient Rome is almost clinical in its accuracy. Like in *War and Peace*, the main characters like the African Emperor Jugurtha and Gaius Marius Caesar are men of heroic proportions. They generate considerable sympathy in your mind. Above all, it is the majesty of ancient Rome that towers above all the characters in the novel. Rome emerges like an individual with a personality and mind of its own. Any sensitive reader of the novel would feel like identifying himself with the city. It is a quality shared equally by all the great novels wherever those are produced. *The First Man in Rome* undoubtedly falls in the same category.

One is equally fascinated by the detailed description of military campaigns in Africa against Jugurtha and in Gaul against German barbarian tribes. These should be of interest to any student of military history. Again the inevitable comparison has to be made with the description of military campaigns on the vast and unending Russian plains. Battles are said to be fought in the minds of men. So be it true of *The First Man in Rome*. It is the depiction of human psychology — both of commanders and ordinary men — in states of distress, crises and conflict, rather than pure description of military tactics and strategies, that is the hallmark of a fine novel. Colleen McCullough has been eminently successful in this respect.

One must train to read *The First Man in Rome* hesitantly. It gets absorbed into the system slowly

but surely. The battle scars of events depicted in the novel can be savoured long afterwards. Amen !

### Books Unread

While there is certain *joie de vivre* in getting access to latest books in these days of rising prices, there is no less a regret at denial of access to books one would cherish to read. With the passage of time resulting in escalating prices of books, drastic cuts in library budgets and big holes in personal pockets, we are fast reaching a stage when one shall be required to travel to the moon to read a new book. I have a bulging portfolio of recent books which I never hope to read. This is a state of affairs in the metropolis of Delhi. The crisis is too serious to be placed in a closet. It calls for a national debate.

I would like to contribute my bit in this direction. Here is a list of books which I would very much like to read. There is no hope of doing so in the present circumstances short of pawning my shirt :

1. GREEN, Peter.	
Alexander of Macedon 356-326 BC.	\$ 40
2. HARRISON, Salisbury.	
The New Emperors.	\$ 25
3. BLOOM, Allen.	
Love and Friendship.	\$ 25
4. BERNARD, Lewis.	
Islam and the West.	\$ 25
5. ATWOOD, Margaret.	
The Robber Bride.	\$ 16
6. MEHTA, Ved.	
Up at Oxford.	Rs. 810
	<hr/>
	Total Rs. 5000

The above-mentioned titles have been published during last three years. Very few libraries in India are likely to possess any of the titles. All of these are quality books and I have no doubt that given the choice, I would prefer to go through these titles in preference to what I had perforce to read. Such a categorical statement is possible on the basis of perusal of book reviews in authoritative review journals.

What is the solution? Only a halfway house can be designed to overcome the lacuna. This could be a kind of solution found feasible all over the world. How? Keep your knowledge alive about the latest literature by perusing book review journals. The bits of information contained in book reviews when cumulated over a period add to the personal bank of knowledge quite a bit. An instance or two would suffice to illuminate the dark corners.



## Platonic Eros

Many years ago one had the opportunity to read Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind*. It has been considered a classic illuminating the dark corners of sociological America. Now one is the happiest to know about his latest book *Love and Friendship* (1993), by reading an excellent review of yet another profound work by him. Allan Bloom writing in the autumn years of his life, reinforces his argument by reconstructing the atmosphere in Plato's academy on the basis of dialogues in Plato's *Republic*. It is as well if one were to speak in the words of Allan Bloom; "Among the participants, there is an atmosphere of perfect equality and a kind democratic trust in one another. Then speech is both frank and exquisite.... They speak openly about Eros, both taking it seriously and laughing about it.... They are dearly having fun without any opposition between edifying talk and enjoying oneself. There is nothing of the atmosphere where somebody clinks on his glass at the table and says, 'Let's talk about serious things'. This is an utterly civilized entertainment of men who can drink and make love but who also can both rhyme and reason". This is indeed the last word in companionship in which friendship and eros are enjoined.

## Defining Secularism

Similarly words of wisdom are to be discovered in Bernard Lewis's latest work *Islam and the West* (1993). Sir Bernard is a British Jewish scholar of great eminence. He has spent a lifetime studying Islam. In his latest work, he has made several oracular pronouncements. His observations on the concept of secularism are most acute and most relevant in the Indian context: "Secularism in the Christian world was an attempt to resolve the long and destructive struggle of church and state. Separation... was designed to prevent two things : the use of religion by the state to reinforce and extend its authority and the use of state power by the clergy to impose their doctrines and rules on others. This is a problem long seen as purely Christian, not relevant to (Hindus and Muslims). Look at the contemporary (India), both (Hindus and Muslims), one must ask whether there is still time — or whether (Hindus and Muslims) may perhaps have caught a Christian disease and might therefore consider a Christian remedy."<sup>1</sup>

There is some satisfaction to be found in reading about books in review journals<sup>2</sup> without having direct access to the books themselves. Ideally it would be desirable to have access to books and to

authoritative reviews simultaneously. 'Half the battle won' is however as well as a full battle won in certain circumstances. Logically one must be judicious enough in appraising the quality of book review journals and their social relevance in the Indian context.

## Review Journals

One must mentally reconcile oneself to do without books; one must make do only with authoritative book reviews. Very few persons would be able to afford individual subscriptions to book review journals published abroad. *Sunday Times Books* constituting section 6 of *Sunday Times* (London) is not available separately. The weekly newspaper is sold for Rs. 185 per issue in India. The total cost for the year would come to a hefty sum of Rs. 10,000. The other important book review journals including *Times Literary Supplement* are also costly by Indian standards. The only recourse left is to read review journals by visiting libraries in New Delhi. Jawaharlal Nehru University Library perhaps alone seems to stock my favourite four review journals :

1. Times Literary Supplement (TLS)
2. New York Review of Books (NRB)
3. New York Times Book Review (NYTRB)
4. Sunday Times Books (STB)

One may be luckier than most persons because one had direct access to these journals during better part of one's professional life. There are occasions when being a librarian is a virtue rather than a fault, going by the lowly esteem in which librarians are held in caste-ridden academic hierarchy. *Times Literary Supplement* (TLS) remains my favourite reading. It has been the prototype upon which have been modelled the other review journals. It has maintained its literary integrity for decades together. It has made only a few concessions to popular culture by introducing photographs and illustrations (undoubtedly pleasing to the eye).

## Popular Reading

Contrasted with TLS, *Sunday Times Books* is a shadow of its former self. At one time, it was edited by literary critics of unimpeachable literary integ-

<sup>1</sup>His statement has been slightly changed by substituting "Jews and Muslims" for "Hindus and Muslims" and "Middle East" for "India".

<sup>2</sup>Since the present article is confined to books published outside India, the review journals for consideration shall also be limited to review journals published abroad. Regrettably two Indian review journals, *The Book Review* (New Delhi) and *Indian Review of Books* (Madras) shall be kept out of the present purview.



rity. Now it caters to the demands of popular culture. Its ethos is in line with the assertion of Susan Sontag that "the purpose of arts is always to give pleasure". So be it for the literary editor of *Sunday Times*. For instance, what is to be made of the following extract taken from a review of the book *The Ottomans* by Andrew Wheatcraft: "Long after the dust had settled, and the heads that bobbed in the Bosphorous had been flushed away by the tides, East and West meet on the Dardanelles in mutual suspicion, mitigated only by diplomatic humbug, and were rendered venally compatible by the profits which each thought to extract from the other". Any comments are superfluous.

*New York Times Book Review* (NYTBR) is the American counterpart of *Sunday Times Books*. It does not however make as much concessions to popular culture as its British counterpart. Usually it carries a special literary essay on the front page which indeed makes the best reading. Its impact on the circulation figures for popular books and thus determining their fate financially is far reaching.

*New York Review of Books* (NYRB) is the American version of *Times Literary Supplement*, but it is more magisterial in its contents, probably because it is owned, edited and published by critics them-

selves. It is also more radical in its contents and provides a special forum to vociferous representatives of women's lib. It takes up popular causes strictly beyond the province of literary concerns. The writing is prone to be stylized in the form of essays in good old European tradition.

By reading these four book review journals, one hopes to be fully apprised of developments in the world of books in the Anglo-Saxon world. It is however a closed world for others. Normally book reviews are confined to books published within the confines of the country. *Times Literary Supplement* makes exceptions in respect of European books from time to time. Hardly a book originating in India and published here is noticed, unless a British or an American editor is independently available. Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy* would not have seen the light of the day, if it were to have been published in India. While the policy may have been determined due to practical considerations, it has a deleterious impact on Indian publishing. Inevitably the need for an Indian counterpart of *Times Literary Supplement* has to be stressed. There is however no hope for the same with shrill calls for globalisation. Existing institutions are indeed in danger of being swamped by foreign invasion.

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**REGISTRAR**

# Adam Smith's Vision on Education and its Relevance to India

K.K. Balachander\*

"It is in the interest of every man to live as much at his ease as he can; and if his emoluments are to be precisely the same, whether he does or does not perform some very laborious duty, it is certainly his interest, at least as interest is vulgarly understood, either to neglect it altogether, or if he is subject to some authority which will not suffer him to do this, to perform it in as careless and slovenly a manner as that authority will permit".

"The endowment of schools and colleges have necessarily diminished more or less the necessity of application in the teachers. Their subsistence, as far as it arises from their salaries, is evidently derived from a fund altogether independent of their success and reputation in their particular professions"

## I

I came to Bombay in 1952 with a modest aim of becoming a graduate, and stop at that. But after graduating in Economics from the Bombay University, it was at the urging of Professors M.L. Dantwala and D.T. Lakdawala, both eminent economists — whose confidence I enjoyed — that I decided to do M.A. and later Ph.D. in Economics in the University. It was in the course of doing my Ph.D. in the field of 'Economics of Education', under the supervision of Professor P.R. Panchamukhi (then Professor of Economics in the Bombay University) that I chanced to listen to a Talk by Professor P.R. Brahmananda (former Director of Department of Economics, University of Bombay) on the topic "Adam Smith's Views on Education". Professor Brahmananda's exposition of the ideas of Adam Smith inspired me to pursue the reading of Smith.

Owing to pressure of completing my Ph.D. dissertation, I could not fully read Smith's monumental work *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776) at that time, but the insights Smith provided on Education did leave an indelible

mark on my mind. With hindsight, I can say that a great deal of what I came to write subsequently on Education, with some degree of recognition in the field, is really one way or the other connected to the great economist's ideas. Especially Book II and Book V of *Wealth of Nations*, which I have briefly discussed in my Ph.D. thesis (*Government Grants and Higher Educational Development with special reference to Indian Experience since Independence*, 1985) give the core of Smith's thinking on Education, including aspects such as the role of the state, institutional arrangements, the role of teachers, funding of universities and colleges, education of the common people. I feel not many of the later-day economists could display the same breadth of interests, knowledge and vision as the founder of the science of economics!

Adam Smith (1723-1790) is regarded today as the *Father of Political Economy*. His *Wealth of Nations* is both the first scientific treatise on Economics as well as one of the most effective tracts to have influenced public policy in the subsequent times. In fact Smith was the first truly *academic* economist, and it was from his time onwards that the progress in Economics has taken place and it has come to be recognised as an independent discipline. Smith was no doubt the intellectual titan of his times.

Smith, in his book, has provided the concept of "invisible hand" which enables the society to maintain internal cohesion and stability. If the individual is motivated to follow his *enlightened* interest (the 'economic man'), it will be found to coincide automatically with the interests of all. A natural economic order, said Smith, is based on the law of 'self-interest'. The main functions of the government are maintenance of social order and enforcing individual rights; it is not the business of the government to regulate the economy, for it is too remote from the activities that it wishes to regulate. "That government is best which governs the least". However, for him, *laissez faire* principle was not a dogma; he advocated state intervention in certain areas for special reasons — provided good standards of efficiency, honesty and social justice are maintained.

I am no admirer of the former British Prime

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Minister, Margaret Thatcher, or her Cabinet-Colleague Sir Keith Joseph. Sir Keith Joseph, soon after taking over as the Chancellor of Exchequer in Thatcher's Cabinet, distributed copies of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* to his staff and insisted that everyone read the book as thoroughly as possible. I am sure, Sir Keith Joseph, a learned person himself, must have been profoundly influenced by Smith's economic ideas, but he would have been equally impressed had he read the relevant chapters on Education in the book; perhaps he would have even persuaded Lady Thatcher to reconstruct the British education system in the light of the ideas advanced by Smith!

Even today I feel the chaos, that is in the education system in India, will clear if the relevant chapters on Education in *Wealth of Nations* is made compulsory reading for those involved in shaping the future of education in this country. Adam Smith's insights into education have not lost their original force and in a modified form their message is relevant to Indian conditions even today, especially when the country is engaged in a radical reform of the education sector.

This article is not only meant to be a homage to this great author, but it also examines afresh Smith's approach to education. Such an analysis — or rather introspection — will enable us to understand better the (modern) views on education by later economists and the current malaise that beset the higher education system in India.

## II

Till the late 1950s, physical capital was considered as the key button which, if pressed hard enough, would set the economic process in motion, and raise future output. Although the demand for education was strong, and the spread of education was thought to be an index of social advance, most governments had yet no specific idea of the relation between education and development. There was therefore no effort at integrating education with the process of socio-economic transformation. In neo-classical writings, the role of human capital in growth was overlooked; the emphasis has been all along on physical capital, mainly in industry, and of financial and fiscal appropriations. The economists, both, Western and Asian, and also from Communist countries, all were too narrow-minded in their approach, too "materialistic" in a sense. However development economists soon recognised that physical structures and equipment were not sufficient to realise the desired economic goals in the

face of skill bottlenecks. They argued that 'investment in man' was having a pervasive influence upon economic development, and that the key investment in human capital is education. When the idea of planning attained considerable ground in many less-developed countries later, the concept of education as an investment creating human resources for development, or, in other words, the *quality* of the 'human stock', gained more importance. Thus there came into vogue 'educational planning' and 'human resources planning' which are obviously closely linked.

The treatment of education as a component that is integral to economic growth (or national prosperity) was not new. It had roots going back to Adam Smith who tried to analyse systematically the contribution that education makes to the working of an economic system. But it acquired a fresh impetus as a result of the series of studies conducted in the 'sixties'. Hints and suggestions of the key elements of human capital formation, particularly through education, can be traced to the writings of many eighteenth and nineteenth century economists besides Smith, but all this was never tied together before Theodore Schultz whose pioneering study *Investment on Human Capital* later served as the *locus classicus* on the subject. Some modern economists however presented it as a new thought, indeed a discovery, that education had anything to do with economic development. As Gunnar Myrdal rightly put it, "the only basis for this pretension was, however, the fact that economists generally after the War had forgotten the importance of education which had so prominently figured in the thinking of pre-war economists from Adam Smith to Alfred Marshall". M.J. Bowman asks "How can there be anything *new* about it? Hasn't the idea of investment in human beings been lying around for a long time?" For Debeavais it appeared somewhat surprising how such a 'commonsense' hypothesis (that education can raise productivity of workers) was not accepted by economists until recently. Schultz did refer to Adam Smith's foray into investment in human capital; he had, in fact, credited him with the genesis of this concept and the source of inspiration. He said :

"In the current debate another type of question has arisen that is also off the mark. Let me state this question. Is it permissible to extend the concept of capital to man, specifically to include the acquired skills and knowledge of the human agent that augment his economic productivity? That an economist should raise this

question is odd, for in economics it has long been known that people are an important part of the wealth of nations. The philosopher economist, Adam Smith, boldly included all of the acquired and useful abilities of all the inhabitants of a country as a part of capital and he gave the right reasons for doing so ... Surely one of the major reasons for the widely held popular belief that economics is *materialistic* is the over-commitment on the part of the economists to a partial concept of capital restricted to material objects.... Clearly what is needed in this connection is an all-inclusive concept of capital". (*The Economic Value of Education*).

Schultz believed that "labourers have become capitalists not from a diffusion of ownership of common stocks, as folklore would have it, but from the acquisition of knowledge and skill.... This knowledge and skill are in great part the product of investment, and combined with other investment, predominantly account for productive superiority of the technically advanced countries...." But Richard Eckaus states: "It came as no surprise, of course, that economic studies should confirm that "Education pays off". *That was the folklore*. However, the impact of the rate-of-return calculations was to raise this 'folklore' to the status of scientific maxim." Novelty consisted in the application of analytical tools for putting the subject-matter on a comparable footing with investment in physical resources.

### III

Adam Smith had insisted on the importance of education in the formation of human capital and the decisive nature of the latter in the working of the economic system and wealth creation. Education and improvement of human skills were considered by him as much part of raising production as accumulation of physical capital. He, however, did not treat education explicitly as a form of national investment and as having direct consequences on economic growth. Though Smith was against state intervention in personal and social life, except in certain well-defined spheres, *he categorically stated that elementary education is one area where the state should intervene with finance*. Smith, both a moral philosopher and an economist, considered education of an elementary type to the masses of non-literates fundamental not only to economic progress but also to self-improvement and social peace. He asserted:

"The State however derives no inconsiderable

advantage from their (the people's) instruction. The more they are instructed the less liable they are to the delusion of enthusiasm and superstition, which among ignorant nations, frequently occasion the most dreadful disorders. An instructed and intelligent people, besides, are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant and stupid one.... They are more disposed to examine, and more capable of seeing through, the interested complaints of faction and sedition, and they are upon that account, less apt to be misled into any wanton or unnecessary opposition to the measures of government".

To Adam Smith, education thus conferred many "indirect" benefits on the common man. It stimulated his mental activity, it fostered in him a habit of wise inquisitiveness, it made him more intelligent, more ready, more trustworthy in his life and working hours — in short, it developed not only 'aptitudes' but also 'attitudes' conducive to economic progress. He believed that education, besides augmenting material wealth, nurtured the mental and moral calibre of every person to his/her maximum potential. This gave an impression that the *social benefits* of education, rather than education's direct consequences for economic growth, were his overriding consideration. It should, however, be noted that his approach is definitely broader than the views held by most of the modern economists. He was in fact an "institutional economist" long before the term was invented.

Smith further observed:

"When any expensive machine is erected, the extraordinary work to be performed by it before it is worn out, it must be expected, will replace the capital laid out upon it, with at least the ordinary profits. A man educated at the expense of much labour and time to any of those employments which require extraordinary dexterity and skill, may be compared to one of these expensive machines. The work which he learns to perform, it must be expected, over and above the usual wages of common labour, will replace to him the whole expense of his education, with at least the ordinary profits of an equally valuable capital. It must do this too in a reasonable time, regard being had to the very uncertain duration of human life, in the same manner as to the more certain duration of the machine." (*Book I, Chapter X, Part I*).

Smith, in the analysis of *fixed capital*, included



useful machines and instruments, profitable buildings, improvements of land and acquired and useful abilities of all inhabitants or members of the society. "The acquisition of such talents by the maintenance of the acquirer during his education, study or apprenticeship", according to him, "always costs a real expense which is capital fixed and realised, as it were, in his person". These observations of Smith (in *Book II, Chapter I*) on human abilities acquired through education — which though cost a certain expense repay that with a profit — were perhaps a vague intuitive anticipation of modern work in the field by Schultz and others. This notion, Mark Blaug states, has given rise in recent years to numerous attempts to measure the rate of return on investment in education to check whether in fact such investment earns 'the ordinary profits of an equally valuable capital'. Smith emphasised the micro-relationship between an individual's education and the tangible benefits accruing to him. Thus there was a definite shift in emphasis from education 'as a force bringing peace' to its role in 'enhancing the earning power of the working class'. But when modern economists spoke of this they meant the tendency of education to raise the income of *everyone* through increased productivity, and not merely of those who received more education.

Smith recognized that the education of the common people required in a civilized society the attention of the Government more than the men of some rank and fortunes because the latter had enough time and means to acquire sufficient education before they entered upon their normal profession. But members of the former category had little time for it and their parents could scarcely afford to maintain them even in infancy. The society stood to gain from imparting (elementary) education to the common ranks of people. For a small expense the public can facilitate this acquisition, can encourage, and can even impose on almost the whole body of the people the necessity of acquiring those most essential parts of education i.e. to read, to write and count, at an early period of life. "The public can facilitate this acquisition by establishing in every parish or district a little school, where children may be taught for a reward so moderate, that even a common labourer may afford it". Smith recognised inequality as a fact; the idea of providing education to the underprivileged in society and making them better and efficient, is thus very old indeed, and has found striking expression in *Wealth of Nations*.

Smith also advocated modernization of the

school curricula to include geometry and mechanics, so that the future factory worker would know the principles behind the practice of his occupation. He desired that every one should be provided with a basic knowledge of those elements in his environment that could lead to productive reflection of the finer things of life. This would produce a mind desirable itself, and would ward off the mental boredom which so often encourage restlessness, mischief and crime. The case for public attention in the education of the masses rested also on another point. Division of labour, according to him, has so limited novelty and variety in the tasks of the worker that he becomes lethargic and potentially degenerate. This leads to certain deleterious consequences on the working population, and education is required mainly as an antidote to this environment. The case is put forward by Smith in *Book V* of the *Wealth of Nations* where he examined the several duties of the government :

"His (worker's) dexterity at his own trade seems, in this manner, to be acquired at the expense of his intellectual, social and martial values. But in every improved and civilized society this is the state into which the labouring poor, that is the great body of the people, must necessarily fall, unless the government takes some pains to prevent it".

At least on the issue of education (or 'the essential parts of education') at the elementary level, it can be said that Smith's views largely coincided with modern thinking which emphasises the importance of universal compulsory education. Here, he was not a doctrinaire advocate of *laissez faire*; he appeared as an interventionist.

There is a general agreement now in developing countries that it is an economic and social necessity to strengthen elementary education and upgrade public resources towards it. *The World Development Report* (World Bank, 1991) has clearly identified "investment in people" as one of the important elements of a development strategy and has urged nations of the Third World to spend more on education, especially at the elementary level. And this needs, no doubt, an active public role. The results of such a policy are evident in Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore and Indonesia, the burgeoning 'Asian tigers'. The emphasis on elementary education in these countries has reaped rich dividends in terms of economic growth and poverty alleviation. These countries had literacy rates approaching 70-80 per-

cent before they took off. *The Human Development Report* (UNDP) has recently rightly concluded that social indicators such as the level of education and state of health are important determinants of well-being of the people.

As far as India is concerned, the fulfilment of the constitutional directive of providing free and compulsory education to all upto the age of 14 — which is the key requisite for economic and social advancement — still remains a pipedream. The country is already 34 years behind the time stipulated in the Constitution (1960) on achieving this aim. Even China can now boast of a literacy rate of 75 percent as against India's 52 percent, and the former's success in recent years is no less due to its high literacy level. In this context, the observations of the eminent jurist, Nani A. Palkhivala (*We, the Nation — The Last Decades*, 1994), is of great relevance :

"History will record that the greatest mistake of the Indian Republic in the first forty years of its existence was to make far less investment in human resources — investment in education, family planning, nutrition and public health — than in brick and mortar, plants and factories. We had quantitative growth without qualitative development. Our gross national product has increased, but not gross national happiness".

#### IV

Though Adam Smith argued for government intervention at the elementary level of education, as far as higher education is concerned, he held altogether a different view. He was against state intervention in the higher education system; he favoured a purely *private* system wherein the teachers and students dealt directly with each other. Smith advocated an element of competition which, he said, "will tend to ensure that nothing but what is useful will be taught". Such competition will be promoted by compensating the teachers through a "system of basic stipends augmented by payments from the pupils' families". In other words, he was for a system of higher education in which teachers' salaries would be largely derived from fees. The maintenance of such a system would be, according to him, to the great advantage of both the parties — those desiring to teach, and to be taught. When the teacher is prohibited from receiving any fee from the students, his interest is set directly in opposition to his duty. It will lead only to idleness and inefficiency on his part.

Smith observed that the wonderful effect of fee-income upon attention and energy thus would ensure a new level of teaching performance in colleges and universities. "The higher the proportion of the total reward made up of fees, the more the security against pedagogic inertia". It would ensure some efficiency since such an element of a teacher's reward is sensitive to the quality of the services rendered. It would also change the prevailing indifference among the students to the quality of higher education. (In fact the budgeting of fees was started in India during the British period as an expression of the principle that "people do not value anything which is given *free* and that the payment of fees is an indication of the seriousness of purpose on the part of the student or his guardian.") (*Wood's Despatch* 1854).

Smith attacked the education system which is supported by public endowments and scholarships as it blunted the ordinary forces of a free market in education. He considered Oxford University (Where he spent six years) a hopeless place because the teachers' "subsistence, so far as it arises from their salaries, is derived from a fund altogether independent of their success" in teaching young men. He found teachers at Oxford University scandalously idle and incompetent. He was worried about the fact that the greater part of the public professors there had, for many years, given up "even the pretence of teaching". According to him, so long as "the endowments of schools and colleges diminish the necessity of application of the teachers", Oxford would remain hopeless. He wanted these endowments to be replaced by fees specifically tied to the educational results achieved. Smith took the view that the money thrown at non-fee-paying higher education would disappear down the sink of a system "in general contrived, not for the benefit of the students, but for the interest, or more properly speaking, for ease of the masters". Under such a system, the students/parents pick up for free whatever is made available, rather than demanding what they want or quality higher education. Also, according to Smith, the best endowed universities are too slow to adopt qualitative improvements and most averse to permit any considerable change in the established pattern of higher education. The universities, he said, have become sanctuaries of 'exploded systems' and 'obsolete prejudices'.

As E.G. West rightly put it, if one was asked to select the most conspicuous of the main features

which distinguish classical economists like Smith from the current practice, it would be "their insistence that fees should not be abolished and should always cover a substantial part of the education." He further states :

"Their main reason for this argument has either been subsequently forgotten or carefully avoided by interested parties. Fee-paying, according to most of these economists, was the one instrument with which parents could keep desirable competition alive (between teachers and institutions). Adam Smith... went to great lengths to insist that the teachers' salaries were to be derived largely from parental fees. It was the absence of such a principle which caused Smith to write about endowed institutions in his most condemnatory manner".

Thus, under the ideal system envisaged by Smith, higher education would be self-financing, leaving the teachers dependent largely on fees, which would, in turn, give an incentive to exert themselves. The students are free to choose their teachers on the basis of their reputation for scholarship and diligence which would mean that only those teachers who are able to attract a sufficient number of students to them can survive in the profession.

It appears that Smith had not given thought to the socio-economic implications of his recommendations for leaving higher education entirely to the private sector. Especially in less-developed countries, a higher education system which is financed exclusively through income from fees (and non-institutionalised as Smith wanted it to be) may perhaps prove to be highly inequitable. Among the modern economists, Milton Friedman's views appear almost to concur with those of Smith. According to Friedman (*Capitalism and Freedom*, 1962), if free competition in higher education is permitted, there would be more efficiency and variety; the salaries of teachers would be responding to market demands and thus, under present conditions, would rise faster than they do now. Educational institutions should be self-reliant, he contends, and seek support from the government only as a last resort. The role of the government should be limited to ensuring that the institutions meet certain minimum standards.

One of the reasons for state involvement in the field of higher education has been the existence of

'externalities'. Since the nation as a whole gained from the supply of educated manpower, the failure of the government to subsidise higher education may mean that there will be under-investment from the viewpoint of the society. Smith perhaps was confident that the automatic operation of the competitive forces would so effectively function as to see that there is optimum level of investment in higher education which will be in accordance with the manpower needs of an expanding economy. Besides the idea of giving opportunities for higher education only to those who could meet the entire cost of their higher education seems rather impractical in countries like India since it will go against other vital principles, in particular the postulate of social justice. Its application will tend to reduce the number of students considerably, and to exclude from higher education all those who have reason to dislike taking a big financial risk.

The anti-thesis of the above system which emphasises *total*, or almost total, government support to higher education, may also not be practicable for different reasons. If free, or almost free, higher education is provided to every one, regardless of income levels, it may prove to be a bonanza to higher income groups who can very well afford to meet the entire, or a substantial part of their higher educational costs. Besides, this also involves a transfer of income from the uneducated (who are mostly poor in less-developed countries) to the educated. Also, as more and more students seek entry as a result of extending liberal subsidy, such a system inevitably breaks down. The economy also gradually shows signs of its inability to absorb the educated manpower at an increasing rate as the private calculations of getting jobs through acquiring a degree may go against it. A cost-free, or almost cost-free, higher education system thus tends to neglect the need for efficiency in general and for manpower planning in particular. A situation will soon emerge when the government will be forced to reconsider its ability to take on the increasing responsibility of financial support to higher education. Countries with a narrow tax-base particularly will face problems of raising resources to meet the increasing expenditure. In fact, such a phenomenon has manifested in countries like India which launched on a rapid expansion of higher education after Independence.

In India, higher education is provided at prices much below the expenditure; the students share only a small portion of it — say 12-15 percent — the



rest being met through mainly government grants which, in turn, has further raised the demand for higher education. Although government funds have increased substantially over the years, because of enrolment explosion and multiplicity of institutions, such funds are found to be inadequate as they are thinning out over a larger number, and a wider area. It is becoming increasingly difficult to get public funds on the required scale to match rising expenditure. At the same time, the share of contribution by way of fees, donations, etc. have also dwindled over the years. Government grants have gradually substituted fees. Besides, the speed at which the higher education system has expanded over the past four decades has led to a fast deterioration in academic standards. Several gaps have appeared in recent years in the physical facilities provided, resulting in overstretched universities/colleges, oversized classes, ill-equipped laboratories and libraries and sub-standard buildings.

Since the government has become the source of major portion of funds, higher educational institutions, especially universities, are being subjected to more government surveillance and control than they would like it to be. Besides politics has seeped into every aspect of academic life in the country, striking at the very roots of autonomy of the universities. Unfortunately there is very little reflection or debate among today's teaching community on the baneful effects on the universities of the growing influence of outside (non-academic) interests. Perhaps it is the indifference on the part of the academics that invites such an intervention! *University autonomy will have some meaning only if the academics believe in it.* It has to be clearly understood that infringement of autonomy is not only a loss of dignity for the university itself, but also a heavy drain on its efficiency.

In his last interview to the New York Times' reporter, Ms. Barbara Crossette, the late Rajiv Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India, had said that universities should be freed from political control so that they could find their own way. "Some will be good, and some will be bad. Now they are all awful", he had observed. Rather than 'centres of academic excellence' or 'assemblies of learned people', many universities have turned into 'centres of mediocrity' and 'corporations of administrators', negating the primary concept of university education. An atmosphere of free debate and dialogue, and of trust and faith, so essential for the free pursuit of knowledge, does not now prevail in universi-

ties. The efforts of a few dynamic and courageous vice-chancellors to bring about improvements in the system are throttled by *negative* forces from *within* and *without*. The present state of affairs is not at all conducive to the pursuit of excellence and national development. Besides, barring a few exceptions, universities have shown little inclination to provide the leadership needed for bringing about a transformation of the teaching-learning process. At a time when knowledge is increasing at a rapid pace, many universities are stuck with outdated and outworn curricula and course-contents for several subjects. Academic standards are relaxed and syllabi diluted in some universities so that it becomes easier for students to pass examinations and obtain degrees. *In short, there is a tendency to slide back, rather than move forward.*

The academic community should do some introspection, or real soul-searching, and assess in a dispassionate manner their contribution from the point of view of enhancing the quality of academic life and keeping their institution in sound health. Otherwise, the general public will start feeling that these institutions exist not for the benefit of the students (and the community) but mainly for the benefit of the teaching community, as Adam Smith would have put it. The proposition that 'teachers should be left alone' may not find easy acceptance in the present context. They have to justify themselves in terms of achievements and excellence, especially when their demand for funds is multiplying. They should carefully examine, and be able to deal with their shortcomings, if any, before these turn into habits.

The final irony of the situation is that with the slashing of government funds in recent years, the system is engulfed in a serious financial crisis. Deteriorating quality is further aggravated by inadequate financial resources. The resistance to raise fee-rates from most academics (and intellectuals) illustrates their failure to understand the deep-rooted crises that have emerged due to lack of funds.

Anyway, the inability of the government to meet a major part of the rising expenditure, and the financial constraints that loom ahead, make inevitable a reappraisal of the prevailing pattern of financing higher education in India which is neither efficient nor equitable. The key issue is how to make the institutions/academic community less and less dependent on government support, and stop their bending, if not crawling, before state authorities



who are likely to be more concerned with regulation than development.

The formulation of appropriate methods of financing higher education has so far not received the attention it really deserves by the policy makers in India. There, however, appears to be a general agreement, at least among the economists, that an upward revision of fee-rates is necessary. It might be ideal if the fee-rates are fixed in such a way that this source meets, gradually (say over a period of 5-6 years), at least 50 percent of the recurring expenditure on higher education. In many Indian states, under the 'salary payment scheme', at present the entire salary expenditure on teachers is met by the government. The new sharing pattern, i.e. fees covering about half of the expenditure, will enable the higher educational institutions to meet a substantial portion (nearly two-thirds) of the expenditure on salaries of teachers, the rest being met by government grants, and donations, among other things. In fact this was the sharing pattern that prevailed in 1946-47 in India — when funds were adequate, institutional autonomy was assured, academic values were respected, and quality of higher education was quite high. What is envisaged is not an overnight revolution but orderly and gradual change.

Drawing upon his experience as a teacher, Adam Smith too had favoured a system of higher education wherein a substantial portion of the income of teachers should depend upon the fees they can garner from students. The only difference is he preferred a purely private system in which the teachers and students directly dealt with each other, which may be found to be impracticable in India taking into consideration the socio-economic conditions of majority of people.

Students financing a major part of their higher education through fees would surely be an ideal system since it would create a serious sense of purpose and greater dedication to studies among them as Adam Smith observed. They may not value higher education if it is given free, or almost free. Some of the main innovations in higher education in countries like the USA have come from student demands and student/guardian support. It is not surprising that higher education remains mostly under the control of teachers and students in these countries. The higher the proportion of income made up of fees, the less the government control and coercion, helping the academics in the process to redeem their seemingly lost freedom and reputation. It will induce both the teachers and the student

community to put forth their best. It will also be the best defense against pressures towards conformity that threaten to politicize and subvert the university system in the country. There is an inherent danger in leaving all the problems for the government alone to solve. Such an overdependence is neither desirable nor feasible. This is the message we get from Adam Smith as far as higher education is concerned.

I may conclude this article by quoting Dr. Malcolm Adiseshiah (1978):

"...the *Wealth of Nations* Part III, Chapter 2 of Book V makes a powerful case for all forms of education — it is perhaps the first extensive treatment of the sociology and economics of education (italics mine) — with particular reference to what we have come to call free compulsory, primary education.... (It) reads like a Third World unfulfilled manifesto of development — which is still after 200 years only a hope".

Note: For a detailed discussion on the views of some of the earlier economists like Adam Smith, please see (i) Blaug, Mark (ed.), *Economics of Education*, Penguins 1968, Vols. I & II, and *Economic Theory in Retrospect*, Third Edition (Indian), Vikas, New Delhi, 1982 (pp.48, 226-27, 438-40; (ii) West, E.G., *Education and the State*, Second Edition, Institute of Economic Affairs, London, 1970 (Chapter 8: The Classical Economists on Education), pp. 111-25, (iii) Vaizey, John, *The Economics of Education*, Chapter II, Faber & Faber, London, 1962; and (iv) Pandit, H.N., "Economic Approaches to Investment Decision-Making in Education", *Indian Educational Review*, Vol.5, No. 1, January 1970, and (v) Joseph, S.C. and Panicker, PGK (Ed.), *Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations: The Bi-Centenary*, University of Madras, 1978. Also see Dandekar, V.M., "Reforms in Higher Education" Late Shri R.S. Dubhashi Memorial Lecture, Goa University (Reproduced in *University News*, Vol. XXIX, November 25, 1991).

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# Socrates : Still on Trial

Shirish V. Chindhade\*

Socrates : call him omniscient or ignoramus, impractical or shrewd, cowardly or heroic, a great guru or even jagatguru, even after a lapse of well over two thousand years he is still on trial. Though dead, he is immortal but immortality often carries on its head the anathema of a continuous assessment and progressively deep-searching evaluation. Distant views no longer remain enchanting when the watcher uses telescopes of newer evidence and point of view. Since it is only the hero's breast that offers an ever-alluring target for the best marksman, Socrates is the hero and I.F. Stone is the unerring marksman as evidenced by the book *The Trial of Socrates* which I read recently and hope to re-read it for a fuller understanding because it is a book to be chewed and digested.

Armed with new evidence laboriously dug out, carefully culled from the classics as well as contemporary scholarship, and constructed and construed with the skill of a seasoned lawyer, Stone puts Socrates in the docks once again for a forthright cross-examination, almost to pull him down his exalted pedestal and show the pedagogue a mere pedestrian. In doing so the writer is aware of several limitations. For instance, the sources : he admits that our knowledge of the entire issue resembles a giant jigsaw puzzle, many parts of which are forever lost. The overwhelming, tormenting question is : How could the trial of Socrates have happened in so free a society ? How could Athens have been so untrue to itself ? The writer confidently addresses to questions such as these and defines the main argument in these words : "This book is the fruit of that torment. I set out to discover how it could have happened. I could not defend the verdict when I started and cannot defend it now. But I wanted to find out what Plato does not tell us, to give the Athenian side of the story, to mitigate the city's crime and thereby remove some of the stigma the trial left on democracy and on Athens." (p.xi) The final aim is also to get a grip on the real, historical Socrates, a person who has left no writings of his own. Therefore, in order to re-enact the entire drama of Socrates' life the writer assiduously builds

up the whole background, devoting the first five chapters — that is one-fourth of the book — to an in-depth study of the setting that finally led Socrates to the trial and the conviction.

In the first chapter he pinpoints the basic difference between the convictions embraced by Socrates and by Athens : the former had a bold, belligerent and egregiously cavalier contempt for a democratic set up of government in total favour of "rule of the knowledgeable", while Athens had an uncompromising and firm faith in democracy. Socrates was obviously out of step with his time in advocating inequality/monarchy which had become extinct many years before him, even before Homer. Even so, as befits a truly democratic mind, Athens showed too tremendous tolerance and for too long for Socrates' undemocratic views and propaganda.

What was the precise charge sheet? The exact indictment? Who levelled it? Was it oral or written? Was it framed by an individual accuser or a group or by some authority holding office? The questions outnumber the answers. Xenophon, in his *Memorabilia* refers to a fragmentary pamphlet published by Polycrates after the trial but lost to history now, thus withholding material information from us.

Part of the indictment alleged that Socrates "corrupted" the youth of the day through his antidemocratic and atheistic/blasphemous observations and discourses. The exact nature of the corruption is suggested by the Greek word *diaphtheirein* meaning to destroy, corrupt, seduce or lead astray. Plato uses the same word to suggest leading (the youth) astray *politically*. A modern/better rendering suggested is "subverting"/"alienating" the youth. Models of corruption cited were Critias and Alcibiades, two of Socrates' eminent disciples. Of these, Critias, a politically important figure later, had an itching palm and a volatile violent temper, while Alcibiades was licentious and insolent. They inherited their flagrant hatred of the common man from their guru who praised Theognis, a poet, whose elegies expressed furious hatred for middle-class upstarts who were demanding the right to vote to public offices. The following lines compare these upstarts to a herd of oxen :

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*Stamp on the empty-headed people ! Jab  
With your pointed goad, and lay the heavy yoke  
Around their necks!*

Homer's following passage offers a much sterner stuff which though Socrates is not cited to have used, was still evidence enough against him. Homer's Odysseus attacks democracy and underscores the divine right of kings thus :

*There is no way all we Achaeans can be kings here  
It is not good for a multitude to rule,  
let there be one lord only,  
One king, on whom the son (i.e. Zeus)  
of crooked—counselling  
Cronos has conferred  
The sceptre and the power of setting  
forth the law, that he may deliberate  
for his people....*

The discussion in the third chapter ("The Clue in the Thersites Story") clarifies convincingly the philosophical divergence between Socrates and Athens.

Socrates equated virtue with knowledge and knowledge consisted essentially in definition. Socrates was wont to claim that all he knew was that he knew nothing. He believed that virtue as knowledge was inaccessible and unteachable especially to the ordinary people. This spelt the basic antagonism between him and the Sophists who were sort of popular philosophers or teachers of that time. An irreconcilable divergence thus grew. Stone tries to expose the "immeasurable conceit" lurking in Socrates' "immeasurable modesty" whenever he professed to know nothing. Interestingly enough, though the oracle of Delphi had declared Socrates to be the wisest of all men, he in reality developed into a master of negative dialectic rarely offering a definite position of his own though he professed the true criterion of virtue and knowledge to be the faculty to define absolutely; the rest was mere *doxa* (opinion) as distinct from knowledge. Ironically enough, in his efforts to teach his students and compatriots all that Socrates seemed to have done was simply discombobulate them in every possible matter of definition, from donkey to democracy. He was a master of obfuscation rather than elucidation. Stone finds great joy in exploring this edifice of contemplation.

Was Socrates trying to use the Delphic oracle declaring him the wisest man in Athens to be a licence for an ego-trap, an exercise in self-glorification at the cost of belittlement of all other compatriots? He declaimed rhetoric which the Athenians loved so dearly and practised so widely. To Socrates rhetoric and rhetoricians were given to flattery of the riffraff whom he despised without

qualms and compassion. On the other hand he was blissfully blind to the impact of his negative dialectic, quite detrimental to both democracy and equity. Such a person is bound to be an enemy of the people in a state where people matter more than individuals howsoever talented or exceptional they may be.

That wasn't the whole story. Socrates described himself as a gadfly to the city of Athens, suggesting that he kept the city-state mentally active and alert with his churning catechisms. But, then, in reality he never seems to have acted as a true guardian of the city's conscience. Stone points out that Socrates could have restrained Athens from the cruel massacre it inflicted on Melos but he didn't and was indifferent to the horrible happening like a shameless shirker, an irresponsible knave. Stone wonders whether the philosopher's frigidity was a pure act of keeping his soul untainted by abstaining from any worldly action ! The most talkative man in Athens, observes Stone, fell silent when his voice was most needed possibly to prevent a tragedy. "While Jesus wept Jerusalem, Socrates never shed a tear for Athens," proving himself to be Nero's ancestor. This unmistakable cold-bloodedness was further honed by his unexplainable admiration for Sparta and Crete as both these city states were inferior to Athens in every respect. This was like courting a coarse courtesan and wholly neglecting a beautiful, loving wife !

If forbearance is a distinguishing feature of democratic convictions, Athens indeed displayed singularly remarkable tolerance to Socrates, or else they would not have waited to see him punished in his seventies. Stone rightly raises the question: Why did they wait until Socrates was seventy ? In the eleventh chapter ("The Three Earthquakes") he discusses some of the considerations that finally led to the verdict : Guilty : To be put to death with an appropriate dose of hemlock.

— The first obvious reason was that Athens must have been extra-ordinarily tolerant of dissident opinion which characterises mature democracy.

— Possibly something singularly cognisable must have happened towards the end of his years to make Athens at last shed its tolerance.

— Could it also be that Socrates' great prestige as a teacher, thinker, philosopher and the aura created around him by the Delphic oracle dazzled and blinded Athens such long ?

In point of fact, according to Stone, the last decade of Socrates' life it was that built up gradually but definitely the man's catastrophe. There were three political "Earthquakes" during this last



decade that threatened and jeopardised the democracy of Athens. Unfortunately some of Socrates' aristocratic students who had burgeoned into cunning demagogues, properly schooled in the guru's "thinkery", and by then thoroughly "Socratified", were involved in the uprisings as stormtroopers of dictatorship. More unfortunately the whole rampaging campaign smacked of/or was at least interpreted as *synomosia* or a "plot" hatched carefully over the years by Socrates' invidious and insidious secular catechisms. As if to add insult to injury Socrates displayed a calculated connivance at the antidemocratic happenings in Athens only to prove, as it were, that he was only practising what he had preached over the years. And what he had preached was this that a true philosopher "fixes his gaze on the things of the eternal and unchanging order" and "had no leisure to turn his eyes downward upon the petty affairs of men." Athens and Socrates thus always remained at cross purposes but despite the relationship one feels like echoing Shakespeare's Brutus whose defense for assassinating Caesar was simply that "Not that I loved Caesar less but that I loved Rome more" to be rephrased as: Not that Athens loved Socrates less but that it loved democracy more.

But doesn't the word "love" above throw colours of emotion on a relationship which had nothing to do with such feelings? Athens, in general, seems to have been indifferent to Socrates, and he was dragged toward death initially on account of a personal rivalry between him and Anytus, the chief accuser, who was a social magnate in Athens and who wanted to settle score with Socrates for personal humiliations. Anytus was a rich tanner and wished that Socrates should coach his son, which Socrates flatly refused because he thought and said fearlessly that Anytus' occupation was servile and, as Xenophon reports in *Apology*, he (Socrates) advised Anytus that he "ought not to confine his son's education to hides." Anytus never forgot this refusal, and the animus between them never ended. Even after the trial, Xenophon reports, Socrates expressed his animus with a bitter prophecy. "I predict that he (the son of Anytus) will not continue in the servile occupation that his father has provided for him ... through want of a worthy adviser will fall into some disgraceful propensity and will surely go far in the career of vice." Xenophon records that in saying this Socrates was not mistaken; the young man, delighting in wine, never left off drinking night or day, at last turned out worth nothing to his city, his friends or himself. So Anytus, even though dead, "Still enjoys an evil reputation for his son's mischievous education and his own hard-heartedness," observes Xenophon.

Athens remained indifferent to Socrates not only during the philosopher's lifetime but centuries after his death too. That Athens, out of remorse, rose in anger and turned against Socrates' accusers is only a romantic and ill-founded story spread chiefly by Diogenes Laertius, the writer of *Lives of the Philosophers* published almost five centuries after the trial. Athens never had such remorse for it had done no wrong to the innocent, and it believed that Socrates got only what he deserved.

Socrates, on the other hand, didn't care a rotten fig either for his life or for the honour of the democracy of his city-state. One notices a curiously cranky irony about him: What he professed repeatedly, namely, ignorance, he did not possess; and what he possessed in plethoric quantity, namely, insolence and intransigence, he never realised to be present in his character. This unprofessed character it was that partly precipitated conviction against him; "partly" because despite his effrontery to the judges, almost 220 out of 500 voted in favour of his acquittal! According to Xenophon the conviction was not a surprise because Socrates wanted to be convicted and hence his intransigence.

But why? Why did Socrates court conviction? Why did he want to die? Was it something purely/exclusively as sublime as courage of conviction or a deep sense of sacrifice for one's city-state, or a just sense of acceptance of one's guilt, or like, Thomas Becket, an irresistible lure of canonisation? What Socrates himself told Hermogenes, a close disciple, shows a dispassionately mundane attitude to the facts of life. Socrates said that his *daimonion* (inner voice) advised him that it was better to die now before the ills of old age overtook him! He said, "If my years are prolonged I know that the frailties of old age will inevitably be realised — that my vision must be less perfect and my hearing less keen, that I shall be slower to learn and more forgetful of what I have learned." This is quite well in keeping with the modern ideas of euthanasia or mercy-killing. Stone also points out that Socrates' choice of death had a clear philosophical justification within Socrates' own frame of reference. Death, according to him, was the most immediate end of a philosopher's life. Since suicide was morally wrong, he didn't (want to) commit it but he believed that not only professional philosophers but all men with a worthy interest in philosophy will seek an end to life as soon as possible. Death was the legitimate goal of a philosopher's life. That is what he himself sought by extracting particular verdict against himself.

We, including Stone, see the verdict as unjustly disproportionate so far as the death of such a rare, worthy person with a provocative mind is con-

cerned. But, then, the real question is : was it the verdict of Athens or of Socrates himself ? Did Athens try him or did he try himself and rule in favour of death punishment ? And what did he try and punish himself for ? — Only political reasons or a remorse for his life's errors in totality ? — His frigid indifference to familial responsibilities (he had three sons, one of them still a child when he was executed), his unscrupulously cruel ungratefulness to and treatment of the more maligned than maligning Xanthippe, his wife ?

The whole case is deeper than meets even the critical eye.

The devil too has his own disciples but to have disciples of the stature of Plato, Aristotle, Alcibiades and others is indeed rather singular credit than criticism to the guru. One is compelled to ask : What, then, was it in the guru's personality that had such a tremendous magnetic pull ? It is only an exercise in elimination if we mention the guru's looks (which by any report were ugly), his language (always ironical, cynical, enigmatic, cantankerous, irreverent and discombobulating), his learning (inaccessible to almost all), total absence of earthly ulterior motives (he never charged any fees from his students), his callous carefreeness or unscrupulous indifference to familial duties ?

Stone's book slings a volley of such disturbing

questions which is what a good book usually does. He finally pinpoints that the trial of Socrates was a prosecution of ideas. He was the first martyr of free speech and free thought which ironically reflects on Athens that was so proud of its democracy.

Socrates needed the hemlock as Jesus needed the Crucifixion to fulfil a mission.

And the mission ? — The towering superiority of the sane individual to the ignorant and bestial mob.

Socrates aimed high and failed. One remembers what Robert Browning says about the teacher in the poem "A Grammarian's Funeral" :

*That low man seeks a little thing to do  
Sees it and does it;  
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,  
Dies ere he knows it.  
That low man goes on adding one to one  
His hundred's soon hit;  
This high man, aiming at a million,  
Misses an unit.*

Yes, Socrates aimed high and failed. So what ! Again Browning helps us out in "Andrea Del Sarto" who says :

*Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,  
Or what's a heaven for ?*

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# Savitri : Sri Aurobindo's Spiritual Romance

R. K. Singh\*

Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950) undertook the composition of *Savitri* (1950) in a period (1893-1905, when he prepared a romantic version of the poem in Baroda, and 1914-1950 when he kept on writing and revising the present poem as part of his *sadhana* in Pondicherry) notable for its uncertain fluctuations in experiments of all kinds in language, rhythm, thought, and manner. To quote him :

The whole of European literature at the present time is of this character; it is a fluid mass with a hundred conflicting tendencies, a multitude of experiments, many minor formations, which has not yet run into any clear universal mould. (F P, p.144)

He was anxiously aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the English poetry in the opening years of the twentieth century just as he could see for himself an opportunity to make a significant contribution to the evolution of human spirit : He sensed the birth-pang of a new developing aesthetic temper and outlook, the possibility of a new form with universal appeal, a new poetry grounded in consciousness.

Sri Aurobindo was naturally inclined to the spiritual, the inward and subjective forms of poetical presentation and sought to reveal what is 'hidden' and rises from the heart of the seer, echoing "the fundamental passion of humanity for something beyond itself" (F P, p.8). He sought to recreate with his soul-force the essential oneness of mankind in harmony with the spirit in nature and the spirit of the universe. Using visioned words in 'inspired rhythm', he sought to give voice to the ideal of the inner being, the self, and revealed spiritual truth of things. He developed *Savitri* as new poetic culture regulated by "the deeper intention of the spirit within" (F P, p.27). The ecstasy of Sri Aurobindo's creative revelation derives from the harmony of the spirit, mind and body; he gives vent to the interpretative power of the human mind and envisioning truth of the deepest in archetypal symbol and images.

Sri Aurobindo saw a symbol of new values in the ancient story of Satyavan-Savitri. When many of

his contemporaries were disgusted with the systems of their time and turning to various schools of religion, philosophy and politics, he turned to the spiritual heritage of the country to transcend the chaos of his time. In an age of doubt and confusion, he sought refuge in the remoteness of romance and explored the forgotten riches of the Vedic past, relating the present and future with the primary human emotions. The disappointment and degeneration of the system against which he struggled as a politician and thinker turned him to the past and the inner dialectic resulted in an ideal of the future, i.e. the ideal divine humanity. He pleaded for an organic, fresh, prophetic and visionary life against the mechanical, uninspiring, flat and complacent life, the blind adherence to the Western culture had produced.

The post-nineteenth century awareness of the poet takes "form of a revival of cultural patriotism" which, as he says, is "highly necessary for a nation which has a distinctive contribution to make to the human spirit in its future development, some new and great thing which it must evolve out of a magnificent past for the opening splendours of the future..." (F P, p.3). As a modern poet Sri Aurobindo revives the past national tradition by *accepting it*, rather than by rejecting it as the Victorian poets did. His elaborate poetic structure *includes* the legendary locale, metaphors, imagery, indirection, allusiveness, association, parallelism, intuition, dramatic design etc and sees man in his wholeness. He sets up a unique blend of yogic rites and intuitive experience to construct a metaphysical romance "of the soul's search for lost Reality" (*Savitri*, p 189). In an elaborate symbolic framework, using animistic and mythopoeic expressiveness of the intuitive experience, the poet confronts and recreates the past as part of a single total experience.

As a myth poet, aware of the aesthetic, intellectual and spiritual tradition of India, Sri Aurobindo culled the material for his new epic from the 'Aran-yak Parva' legend which has the resonance of social acceptance about it and carries an authority that a creative genius can command. The narrative world of a myth poet is a vision of reality in terms of human concerns, hopes and anxieties. Sri Aurobindo's intuitive vision in *Savitri* is the poetic projection of man's dreams, expectations, fears and

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desires. He composed one of the world's longest poems (Raghubir Sharan Mitra's *Manavendra* (on Nehru) and Ramanand Tiwari's *Parvati* are the other equally long epics) with the principle of *adhikara*, which in Yoga relates to the "immediate power of a man's nature that determines by its characteristics his right to this or that way of Yoga, of union, which, whatever its merits or its limitations, is his right way because it is most helpful to his personally" (FP, p. 40). With his revealing ideas and motives the poet presents in the idealised world of the epic the model for a myth of immortality within human culture: "Earth must transform herself and equal Heaven/Or Heaven descend into earth's mortal state" (*Savitri*, p. 456). Through a descent-ascent pattern — the descent from a higher world, the descent to a lower world, the ascent from a lower world and the ascent to a higher world — he conceives man's vision of his own life as a quest *à la romance* to rediscover the paradise within.

Sri Aurobindo's in-seeing through archetypal symbols, the natural body of his poetry and vision, to recreate the world and interpret its order of reality is a distinct twentieth century poetic feature. He adapts myth to indicate the primitive intuitions, occult ritual and religio-social ethics of India, underlining his poetic evolution from the objective to the inward and from the inward to the spiritual, with many curves, turns and cycles that indicate self-expansion and self-discovery. It is the mythic mode through which Sri Aurobindo projects his concept of knowledge and growth of inner-consciousness, spiritual realisation, the passage from inconscience to superconscience, and expression of soul-perception and soul-vision. In *Savitri* myth is symbolised in mystical knowledge, spiritual philosophy, experience and meaning of life. The epic turns out to be the poet-philosopher's mystical system, a synthesis of yogic rituals, spiritual doctrine and mythical allusions, creating his concept of cosmic evolution. Amalgamating vision and imagination, the epic offers a dream of cosmic salvation, a scheme for evolution of a new race, a quest for seeing all things in the infinite spirit and the infinite spirit in all beings, a dramatised unfolding of the integral change in human nature to effect the changes of collective consciousness. The poet seeks to lift man out of animal life to the glories of spiritual existence. The narrative betrays the meditative spiritual zeal for revealing universally significant moral intents of the future life.

In Sri Aurobindo's poetic scheme, it is necessary to live in the Eternal, to realise the true self, to recognise the reality of matter and see into it the

hidden eternal reality. The poet propounds that the world and the individual are complementary, expressing the divine reality, and the nature outgrows the physical, penetrating deep into the sphere of spirit and consciousness.

The texture of language and thinking in Sri Aurobindo is part of the fabric of the ancient Indian tradition, a tradition of self-searching and self-knowledge. The spiritual reality he develops through mythic imagery, which leads the readers towards new reaches of spiritual experience, is an aspect of the universal spirit which comprises all souls or all things whatsoever. The artistic medium emerging from the poet's ideal of spiritual consciousness, attitude, emotion and the experience of eternity is a vehicle for the vision of emancipation of humanity and the inconscient-bound earth. His concept of cosmic evolution takes into account nature, God, man and the universe in the whole and in every part, imbuing them with symbolic significance.

The key-ideal of spiritual evolution with its complex descent-ascent pattern in the consciousness for an ultimate divinisation of life on earth is presented not as a mere concept but as an action performed gracefully and confidently by the emblematic mythic agents. The structure of emotion, attitude and tone of the epic rest on the interwoven cycle of faith, hope and love. Deriving from a remoter antiquity, Sri Aurobindo revives the mythical notion of the union of heaven and earth, rather the ascent of earth to the highest and the descent of heaven to the lowest to transform the mankind. The imaginative vision of the poet is a perception of the ultimate unity which reconciles the apparent antagonism in the cosmos and gives joy and significance to the individual. As a poet of universal awareness, Sri Aurobindo thinks of evolution in terms of vigorous inner action. The epic constructs a quest and settling of a spiritual social order, displaying the strong creative passion of its writer.

The poet's thesis is: Each man who is higher in the ascent of life is the means of helping those who are lower, and those who are highest of all are helpers of all mankind. It is as if all men were connected together by elastic cords. If a man rises a little above the general level of his fellows, the cords tighten. His former companions tend to draw him back, but with an equal force he draws them upwards. The higher he gets, the more he feels the weight of the whole world pulling him back and the more dependent he is on the divine support which reaches him through the few who are still above



him. Each of such individuals is a channel of God's bounty to every heart that would receive it. Each has his part to play in the great plan of cosmic salvation through spiritual evolution.

The unfamiliar aspects of the inner spiritual world and the permanent principle of nature in evolution not expressed in poetry before accord to the poet the quality of novelty, individuality and particularity. The inward turn of action and experience, the large spiritual enterprise, the elevation of individual and collective existence, dominance of unconscious feeling over self-conscious perception, make *Savitri* a modern poem. The exactness of expression, the intensity of emotion, the nobility of thought, the significance of the ideas expressed, the comprehensiveness of the phrases, the concreteness of the imagery, the complexity of meaning and suggestion — all contribute in making the epic both a prophecy and monument.

Sri Aurobindo is true to his inner art motive in the composition of *Savitri*. The epic is "an inner drama of the soul with the soul itself for the real stage" (F P p.264). The words and expressions which are in conformity with the truth of inner awareness invite readers to 'feel into' or 'become', to realise the complex experience conveyed through the medium. The importance of the work lies, not in the raw material, the *Mahabharata* story, but its transformation, which makes the readers live in the soul and in the inner mind. The totality of experience ensues from the poet's looking back and looking forward with a constant sense of the infinite.

Spirituality, which is characterised by a high degree of refinement of thought and feeling, breadth of vision, the inmost sense of things and above all, an archetypal imagination discernible in the inner style of the poem, or what Goethe calls *geistig-organisches*, provides the acid test of the epic's quality. It is a "seeing in the self", the reasoning of the soul. Spirituality is the creative principle that sustains the structure of the epic. Sri Aurobindo's concept of intuitive-spiritual poetry, which is the product of a direct inner perception and vision, is based on the ideal of "total image" and the "inner continuity" in literature. Sri Aurobindo's spiritual imagination, termed as the Overmind, organises the archetypes of human experience in a symbolic mould. The epic shows the poet's intuitive insight into the finer passages of the soul and the inner meanings of the nature and things with a larger sense of humanity.

Since Sri Aurobindo as a philosopher far excels his fame as a poet, his readers often lose sight of the

imagined realisation in the deeper recesses of the soul as manifested in poetry and find *Savitri* philosophic. But so long as the reader is listening to the voice of poetry in the epic, he will have no difficulty in appreciating the unique blend of thought and expression in it. The difficulty, however, arises when philosophy takes over from without and the reader tends to relegate poetry to the secondary position. In the Indian cultural tradition, says Sri Aurobindo, inspiration of the deepest spirit or intuitive expression is a union of "philosophy, psychic and spiritual science and religion" (F P, p 216) and its partial dissection, even for critical purposes, will hamper total reading and appreciation of the poem.

*Savitri's* spiritual experience is a blend of the poetic and philosophic, the emotional and the rational, just as Sri Aurobindo is a poet-seer whose feelings and experiences are real to him. He is perfectly in control of the duality of the poetic creator, "the instrumental which lives and feels what is written" and "the seer-creator within who is not involved". Far from trying to set his philosophic system to verse rhythm of *Savitri*, he constructs his quest for the kingdom of heaven or earth through the mass of sublime inspirations of thought and image, through the archetypal symbols that epic lives as spiritual poetry. The whole verbal structure reveals, not a philosophic truth as such but an intuitive truth of God, Nature and man, an inner view which stimulates inner vision and enriches the actuality of outer life.

The poetic centre of the epic romance lies *within*: *Savitri* is the Yoga of self-discovery through wanderings into regions beyond and ultimately discovering the forces that direct and control human life and existence. The revelation lies in the harmonious totality of man's being, which is inner heroism. It is an epic of the human soul journeying through different kingdoms of the mind toward the divine soul and returning again to raise the soul of all others. The earth-life is made more meaningful with the widened realms of the soul, the intimate living with Nature and its spirit. The epic ascends the peak of achievement by virtue of the poetic transmutation of the legend with a central female character, which encompasses all levels of outer and inner world, crystallising the experience of men of all times and all nations.

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# THE SPIRE

## A Symbol of Relevance

S. Abdul Kareem\*

Books get publicity in the print medium when they are banned. Between the review of a controversial title and its being received on the shop shelves, the interim is a phantasma. Very few titles thus introduced to the literary taste buds leave us raving mad. When would one lay one's hand on such books as *The Volcano Lover* by Susan Sontag, *Angels in America*, *Millenium* by Tony Kushner, *History and its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* by Francis Haskell, *Letters of Charles Dickens VII Vol.* OUP edited by Kathleen Tillotson, Graham Storey and Angus Easson, and *Am I a Murderer?* by Pawal Szapiro — the five titles selected by eminent critics as books that impressed them most in 1993 (TLS-*The Hindu* — 2.1.1994)? Those far away from the literary Meccas, languishing far from the luminosity of book fairs, have to fall back upon the titles of yester years to provide the daily fare of reading pleasure.

Books are read. Some are re-read, the ones to be styled as classics. John Middleton Murry would have us believe: 'Great work simply will not yield its full significance, its essential beauty, at the first reading; not until you have patiently worked your way into the creative centre can you say that you have apprehended it'. To compel a reader to come back with renewed pleasure is the hallmark of a good book. Chewing the cud is a pleasurable pastime with quite a few of us, more so when one is starved of the new titles.

*The Spire* appeared in 1964, nearly ten years after William Golding's first novel, 'Lord of the Flies' (1954), the one to earn Golding his Nobel prize in 1983. It makes a 'difficult reading' in the words of David Skilton, 'a novel which absolutely demands to be read twice', 'being thought of as almost wilfully obscure.' Sometimes the pseudo-complexity of a work of art in the task of presenting a quasi-philosophical view keeps the reader away from its message and meaning. Moreover, its presentation of the main theme is through the Church Dean, Jocelin, the one whose chief motive power to build a spire is as a result of his vision, visionary as he was, who had a vision of the spire as a 'crowning glory',

completing as it were the 'diagram of prayer.'

The dean was sure that 'the stones will go up bit by bit and the wood..Then the Spire will be done' octagon upon octagon, pinnacle by pinnacle. He suddenly discovers to his dismay that 'there are no foundations and Jocelin's folly will fall before they fix the Cross on top.' The realisation dawns on the dean: 'a spire goes down as far as it goes up' or was it 'up as far as it goes down?' 'So if you are going up four hundred feet, you will have to go down four hundred feet. Hence the project is plagued with the affliction of a proposed height without any depth. As a result his faith becomes shaky. Moreover, the project is financed by the dean's aunt, Lady Alison, who was the mistress of the previous king. Obviously the money is not pure. It is tainted. The dean has fouled the sacred precincts with immoral designs on the wife of Pangal, Goody. The master builder has seduced the wife of the church servant. The whole project is founded on filth. As a place of worship, the cathedral has suffered a desecration. The fanum, the temple has been thus rendered profane.

As a symbol, the spire has levels of explanation, sometime sacred, sometime mundane. The phallic connotation makes itself conspicuous much earlier in the novel. When the model of the cathedral is introduced in page 8, the similarity of the model with the man lying on his back is clearly suggested:

'The model was like a man lying on his back. The nave was his legs placed together, the transepts on either side were his arms outspread. The choir was his body; and the Lady Chapel where now the services would be held, was his head. And now also, springing, projecting, bursting, erupting from the heart of the building, there was its crown and majesty, the new spire.'

The Freudian connotations are too obvious to be ignored.

The August gale had set the spire swaying like a mast. The narration picks up momentum when the spire grows unsteady. The Nail from Rome, suggesting the overtones of Crucifixion, would give and did finally give it the requisite stability. Thus the novel generates new meanings, as it were, new meanings grown out of the fiction.

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In the dream, the dean is struck by the tuberculosis of the spine. He sees himself as a building, the arms were transepts, and the people jeer at him as they know that this church had no spire. The phallic image keeps popping time and again. The likeness between the cathedral and the human body is glaring. As the spire reaches the stage of completion, Jocelin grows in awareness of the havoc he had wrought, of his having destroyed Pangal, Goody and Roger Mason. The final moment of his death brings the vision of Goody, Pangal's wife, like Dr Faustus who had bartered away his soul to Mephistopheles, desired the vision of fair Helen during the last minutes of the midnight hour.

To the dying Jocelin, the vision of the spire fades and that of the apple tree remains: 'It's like the apple-tree'. Thus the work abounds in 'a new lesson at every level, a new power'. The symbolic significance oscillates between the religious and mundane on the twin axes of phallic and spire images. As the work is based on a vision, it is quite baffling. One reading wouldn't do. A re-reading would take one nearer to the reality of the message rendered rich.

The comparison between the cathedral and man, by a stretch of imagination, invites a comparison with Shri Basava, the twelfth century reformer of Karnataka, who regaled his followers with truths that come home to their bosoms through his Vachanas, as in :

*"The rich  
will make temples for Siva,  
what shall I,  
a poor man,  
do?"*

*My legs are pillars,  
my body the shrine,  
the head a cupola  
of gold.*

*Listen, O, Lord of the meeting rivers  
Things standing shall fall  
but the moving ever shall stay."*

(Tr. A.K. Ramanujam)

If faith thus gets internalised with the human body, where is the need for these external appurtenances, with structures, superstructures and scaffoldings? The Kingdom of God is within us. But children and those in their adolescence need be shown the majestic heights of the spires, the slenderness of the minarets and the rotundities of the domes. Jawaharlal Nehru writing from his prison cell to his young Indira Priyadarshini in his letter, later collected as the last piece of the 'Glimpses of World History', grows poetic :

*"The old temple spire, the mosque with its slender minarets, the Gothic cathedral — all of them point upward with an amazing intensity of devotion, as if offering a prayer in stone or marble to the sky above."*

Visions, such as this should prevail.

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# Anita Desai's 'Baumgartner's Bombay'

## A Study

Ramesh K. Srivastava\*

Indian novels in English have long been written on the oft repeated themes, such as, India's struggle for Independence and its partition, caste system and economic disparities, haves and have-nots, social and religious evils and all sorts of corrupt practices. It was with Anita Desai and Arun Joshi that the Indo-Anglian fiction stepped out of these self-imposed bounds and began to take the domain of man's inner exploration — the incompatibility of man-woman relationship and more particularly of problems of man's (and even woman's) psyche, alienation, his quest for identity and his problem of survival.

Anita Desai's novel *Baumgartner's Bombay* (London, Penguin Books, 1989. Pp. 230) depicts the pathetic plight of Hugo Baumgartner who remained a wandering Jew all his life without having any sense of belonging, and who eventually dies a tragic death. He spent his early life in pre-war Berlin where he was derided with :

'Baumgartner, Baum  
hat ein Nase wie ein Daum!  
Baumgartner's dumb  
Has a nose like a thumb!' (p. 38)

It is in India that Baumgartner gets some security and his home. Though psychically and socially an orphan, he carves out his existence in this country. In his quest for survival, he undertakes some business in Calcutta and Bombay but gets cheated. Though Baumgartner lived for fifty years in India, he was still called a "*Firangee*, foreigner." The absence of his sense of belonging is reflected in his complexion which is too dark for a German and too fair for an Indian as a result of which he could merge himself completely with neither of them. Among the dark-complexioned Indians, he looked like a great hunk of red meat. There was a great desire within him to belong to some country, to make place for himself at least in India but he failed in his quest. Since the Jews from Europe were being pursued and hunted down, he wanted to bring his

mother to India but that was possible only if first of all he himself could feel at home.

The quest for identity which becomes of prime concern for Baumgartner does not bother his woman-friend Lotte though she too is a German national in Calcutta. When Hugo Baumgartner asks her, "What nationality have you?" she unhesitatingly answers, "*Ach*, what does it matter? I can change any day that I want. Many men are wanting to marry me — that Kanti Sethia, he is always asking and asking" (p. 101). The fact that the jeweller was fifty years old and was an Indian does not matter to Lotte and she says, "If I have to change my nationality, I can marry him and change at once" (p. 102). Harassed and tortured, many Jews from Germany forgot their past and reconciled to leading an anonymous life in any country but not so with Hugo Baumgartner who even in Ahmadnagar camp could not forget his past — his childhood spent in Berlin, and his youth at his father's desk. He shed nothing, carrying everything with him like a mournful turtle. Even the life in the camp was safe from what was outside, as the rumours came of other Jews eaten by tigers in the forest, trampled by elephants, or drowned in rivers. His captivity in the camp provided him with an escape from their fate in Germany, and safety from the anarchy of the world. When he was in a camp, he had the company of Julius or Schwarz whereas outside he would be alone — a man without a family or a country.

The absence of money forced Baumgartner to live like a beggar. Since there was no chance of his going back to Germany, and since he had no family or friends in a wide world, his only pleasure remains to be with his cats who devour a bagful of scraps of food or fish brought for them or sit in his lap for company. The cats became quite attached to him — one lay across his feet, another stood by his knee and a third climbed on to the chair back and balanced there. Since Baumgartner had none in the family other than cats, they, after his death, are termed "*defenders of Baumgartner's realm*" (p. 224).

The problem of Baumgartner's loss of identity is also reflected in his choice of language because he

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does not know which language to employ :

He found he had to build a new language to suit these new conditions — German no longer sufficed, and English was elusive. Languages sprouted around him like tropical foliage and he picked words from it without knowing if they were English or Hindi or Bengali — they were simply words he needed: *chai, khana, baraf, lao, jaldi, joota, chota peg, pani, kamra, soda, garee....* What was this language he was wrestling out of the air, wrenching around to his own purposes? He suspected it was not Indian, but India's, the India he was marking out for himself (p. 92).

It is one's language, one's family, one's parentage and one's own people which give a sense of identity to a person and Baumgartner has none of them.

Having failed to strike perfectly his roots in India, Baumgartner remains alien to his fellow Europeans as well as to Indians and consoles himself in communicating with his cats whom he calls "his *Familie* at home." He finds a sense of satisfaction among a number of cats for whom he gathers leftovers of the food from Farrokh's restaurant *Cafe de Paris* and gives them names, a house and a sense of belonging which he lacks himself. He laughs and cracks jokes with them. He calls Mimi, one of the cats, naughty as it bites him in the thumb. He calls them affectionately, crooning in German, "Fritzi, *du alte Fritzi, komm, Fritzi.*" He picks up the sick and the maimed cats from the street and nurses them at home. Anita Desai gives some fascinating details of Baumgartner's warm relationship with the cats. He followed "a cat on the prowl, a grey cat with a wicked, watching eye, but it leapt over a wall and vanished amidst a clatter of tin cans where Hugo had no wish to follow" (p. 63). He is always apprehensive that on some excuse, Farrokh might stop supplying scraps for his cats and he might have to look elsewhere for largesse to keep "his growing family fed and contented." Whenever the cats become ill or need surgery, he takes them to a charitable clinic. When Krut, a moneyless tourist from Germany, comes to his flat in Hira Niwas, he treats him as a guest but realizes that first he must take care of the cats.

Instead of being praised for his generous and selfless act of feeding the cats, he is termed the madman of the cats, the *Billewallah Pagal*. While collecting the leftovers, he comes across one ailing German tourist Krut who had no money, no food and no shelter. Baumgartner takes him to his Hira Niwas flat, offers him food and shelter but who in order to pocket the host's silver gifts kills him and escapes.

By focussing on Baumgartner's relationship with his cats, Anita Desai sketches two sets of characters in contrast. On the one hand, there are Krut and the dehumanised son of Chimanlal, and, on the other, Farrokh, Baumgartner and his cats. The Hira Niwas flat which is good for Baumgartner and his cats appears shabby, dirty and stinking for the peniless Krut. The cats remain happy with mere scraps of food and affectionately wound themselves around their benefactor's legs, "arching and rubbing and making small, scolding sounds, then gradually settling down to nosing through it all till they arrived at the delicacies they decided to accept" (p. 147). The German boy, on the other hand, remains peevish and unhappy. Rather than being grateful to Baumgartner for picking him up from the street and for giving food and shelter, he grumbles about the stinking rooms and the repelling mess which he finds unfit for the acts of life. For Baumgartner, this mess and the cats are a kind of fertilizer for human behaviour which "helped him to be comfortable, to survive, live, enjoy companionship" (p. 148); for Krut they become a ground for condescending attitude, snobbishness, discourtesies, ill-manners, theft and even murder. Baumgartner wonders why did he bring the lunatic German boy into their midst which polluted the rich, warm, natural life in his flat! The cats gratefully welcome Baumgartner, and help him survive but Krut kills him. As opposed to natural life given by the cats, Krut gives him a violent death. Other Europeans were interested in Baumgartner's background and his past before building relationship with him whereas the cats care for what he is in the present. Krut fails to reciprocate Hugo's friendship; the cats do. Whenever Baumgartner feels alone, he picks up a cat, holds its fur to his chest, and closes his eyes "as a young man might with a photograph of his beloved held close." The cats growl and purr, kneading his thighs with their claws, and Baumgartner laughs because their claws tickle him. Krut makes fun of Baumgartner whereas the cats greet him exuberantly no matter how he happens to be. His business partner Chimanlal's son is an extension of Krut. When Baumgartner goes to visit the ailing Chimanlal in the hospital, his son turns him out of the ward, heaping humiliation for his compassionate and courteous act. And when he joins the mourners at Chimanlal's cremation, he stands at the edge of the crowd for being taken a foreigner. As if this was not enough, Chimanlal's son dismisses the bits of business Baumgartner had with his father as also his partial claim on the race horse because the entire business was based on friendship between Baumgartner and Chimanlal without legal papers. When the supply of money is cut off by

Chimanlal's son, Baumgartner begins to live like a beggar.

With the advantage of a German mother, a Bengali father and having lived both in Germany and in India, Anita Desai naturally feels at home in depicting scenes and characters both German and Indian with equal felicity. What is common for Baumgartner in Germany and in India are the same sort of violence, lawlessness, inhumanity, tyranny and fanaticism. By making Baumgartner experience the same sort of things in both the countries, Anita Desai lends to the novel a universal significance.

In addition, Anita Desai gives a series of flitting pictures as if having recorded them with a movie camera. These pictures are quite variegated and cover the entire length and breadth of India. She writes of foreign tourists who come in the name of visiting India but in reality look for drugs and opium and who beg, pickpocket, steal and even murder once they run out of money. Farrokh, a restaurant owner, knows so many of them and says, "Music they have to have, hashish they have to have, women they have to have — not wife, not like my wife, but *women*. And all in Goa they can get, under coconut tree, under moon and star. So there they go. Pay fisherman ten rupees to build hut with coconut palm leaf. Crawl in with women, with hashish, not come out for two days, three days, five days even" (p. 15). These foreign tourists sell their watches, cameras and other belongings or wait for money from their countries which many times does not come. Then comes the question of their corruption, theft, burglary and even murder. Farrokh points out this ugly reality by saying, "No longer blackman killing whiteman for money, Baumgartner *sahib*, it is now whiteman killing and robbing blackman. And whiteman killing whiteman too" (p. 16). This turns out to be true when Krut, a German tourist, kills Baumgartner merely to steal his silver gifts so as to make some money from them.

Anita Desai also gives flitting pictures of various Indian cities, both pleasant and unpleasant, but most of which turn out to be stereotyped. No attempt, however, has been made to individualize a majority of pictures. It is on such occasions that Anita Desai seems to succumb to the popular taste of the foreigners to whom these pictures come as confirmation of the newspaper reports of ugly Indians. The redeeming feature of these vignettes is that Desai does not spare the foreigners. She writes of the cattle that "wore their hides draped in loose folds on their skeletons, roaming aimlessly in search of non-existent grass;" of millions and millions of bloody mosquitoes whirring in ears like

electric fans, stinging all over; of the sari-veiled woman, selling bananas, raising her voice above that of another vending fish with equal ferocity — "*Pomfret, pomfret — Jheenga, Jheenga,*" and of "the *chai-wallah* wandering through the crowds with his kettle of sweet, smoky tea and a milky glass at the end of each finger, *chai, garam, garam, chai*, his lugubrious cry at Indian railway station." Desai writes, too, of the ugly and terrifying sight of women carrying excreta on their heads and of the dirty children "silent except for their noses that ran with clogged, choking sounds" or without a stitch of clothing on them. She writes of how the hot sun fries Baumgartner like an egg in a pan, of food which could be "fish, flesh, fowl or foliage," and of fiery sauce which could scald the coating of one's tongue. The distinctive Indian odour is "of dung, both of cattle and men, of smoke from the village hearths, of cattle food and cattle urine, of dust, of pungent food cooking, of old ragged clothes washed without soap and put out to dry, the aroma of poverty" (p. 110). Desai writes too of Benares *doms* who throw bits of human meat from half-burnt dead bodies for waiting dogs, of hundreds of sacrificial goats and sheep slaughtered in Delhi, of the Mohurram procession at Lucknow, and of colourful Holi at Mathura. The sights appear so familiar and yet not without a subtle tinge of humour, irony and satire.

Anita Desai has a perfect command over the English language. Though in *Baumgartner's Bombay*, her language is not as poetic, as lyrical and as full of complex images as it was in her first novel *Cry, the Peacock*, it still has the natural flow of a deep stream. The images she uses create startling but appropriate word-pictures before our eyes. The coconut trees stand out "like blackened spokes and bore no fruit, nothing, just some dead, dry leaves, fan-shaped, like broken umbrellas." Baumgartner's face blazes "like an over-ripe tomato in the sun on which warts gathered like flies" and his legs look like "pieces of wood flung down." A sound emerges from his open mouth "like a train emerging from a tunnel." The only problem is Anita Desai's frequent use of German words and expressions which are quite natural for her characters with a German background but become stumbling blocks in the way of most Indian readers. She would have done well to give either English equivalents within the text or at the end of the novel in an Appendix. The success of a novel depends on its complete readability and though *Baumgartner's Bombay* might not fulfil this requirement completely because of its German words and expressions, it is one of the finest portrayals of the *Trishanku*-like modern man and his perennial quest for identity in a fast-changing world where various identities clash, merge and are obliterated.

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# Books and the National Movement in India

## A Study of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Anand Math* and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's *Indian War of Independence*

L.S. Ramaiah\*

### Introduction

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In every country there is an information chain which is called the golden chain. It consists of poets, writers, scientists, printers, publishers, booksellers, libraries, information centres, librarians, information scientists, readers and literates. They constitute the intellectual fulcrum of a country. Every link in this information chain is equally important. The quantum and quality of the chain ultimately determine whether a country is developed or underdeveloped, powerful or weak.

### Books and their Impact

In the Middle Ages, most of the books were pen-written. Books were chained and they were scarcely available for the general public. The invention of movable type by Johann Gutenberg in 1453 and the subsequent spread of printing revolutionised the information ecology. It brought many changes throughout Europe. Printing and publishing made it possible for the widespread of education and easy access to information. The growth of scientific and technological education led to the invention of Spinning Jenny, Steam Engine etc. which finally led to the Industrial Revolution. On the basis of superior informational infrastructure and scientific and technological growth, Great Britain established an empire on which the sun never set for a few centuries.

Since the 16th century, books have become a powerful medium of communication. The influence of books as carriers of ideas and as torch-bearers of

democratic values grew decade after decade into a mighty wave. They started moving the minds of man into social action. Jean Jacques Rousseau's *The Social Contract*, Diderot's *French Encyclopaedia* were the fuel for the French Revolution. The pamphlets of Thomas Paine helped the American Revolution. Mazzini's *The Duties of Man* and Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* were instrumental in the upheavals in Italy and Russia in 1858 and 1917 respectively. Hadn't the above books been written, the world would have been different from what it is today.

### The British Rule in India

In the first quarter of the 18th century after the death of the Mughul Emperor, Aurangzeb in 1707, the central power of India declined and India was balkanized into various kingdoms. The country was at crossroads. There was widespread inertia. People were inactive and unparticipative in events. Robert Clive, in his correspondence to home, stated that vast masses assembled on the roadsides to Plassey, but if each one of them had thrown even a stone, the British army which won the battle of Plassey, would have been vanquished. Such was the state of affairs at the beginning of the rise of the British power in India. The British, soon after the battle of Plassey, within a span of 50 years, established their suzerainty over the entire India. The predatory policy of the East India Company and the subsequent exploitation economically ruined the country.

### English Education

In spite of political convulsions and economic retrogression, the first century of the British rule in India was remarkable because of the introduction of English education in 1830 by the famous Macaulay's Minute. Through this channel came the liberal ideas of the West which stirred the people and roused them from the slumber of ages. There was a remarkable outburst of intellectual activity in India. This affected at first only a small group of persons but gradually the ideas spread even to the masses.

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## Raja Ram Mohun Roy

Raja Ram Mohun Roy, a remarkable personality, was the pioneer of the new spirit of the modern India. He was a staunch advocate of English education. He was a forceful writer both in Bengali and in English. He carried a crusade against several superstitions and social abuses and founded institutions for social change. His political ideas were also no less radical than his social ideas. He was an ardent lover of freedom. An indirect result of his campaigns, both social and political, gave impetus to the development of Bengali Prose literature and Bengali journalism. Indian nationalism thus had its roots in his writings and the contemporary Indian literature.

## Indian Vernacular Literature and Censorship

Printing press was introduced into India by the European missionaries. Literature in Indian languages gradually increased over decades. The British, in the colonial context, as all bad rulers and despots, considered the progress of knowledge among the Indian masses as an object of terror, since it was fatal to them and their designs. After the Mutiny of 1857, the British had ruthlessly curbed the progressive ideas of Indians. The Press and Registration Act of 1867 was enacted. Censor and ban on publications with progressive ideas increased. Gerald N. Barrier in his book, *Banned Controversial Literature and Political Control in British India, 1907-1947* gave an exhaustive list of titles that were banned. This list covers only from 1907 but not from 1867. Even a cursory look at this list of banned literature reveals how ruthless the British were to retain their hold on India.

The growth of nationalism, the spread of freedom movement and the final exit of the British from India are a known story to all of us. For the turn of events, political and social awakening of the people in India, a galaxy of leaders from Raja Ram Mohun Roy, Surindra Nath Benerjee and Dadabhai Naoroji to Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and M.N. Roy fought the British guns with their pens. At this point a line from the writings of Kaloji Narayana Rao, a modern Telugu poet is worth-quoting :

*Akshara rupam dalchina okka sira chukka laksha medhallanu kadhilisthundi* (Every drop of ink which takes the shape of letters stirs up lakhs of minds).

Whether books are kept in libraries or not, their importance depends upon the information that they contain. It is not only that men make books but also

books make men. The very purpose of books is to diffuse knowledge and to make private knowledge public. Libraries are only an institutionalised form for that purpose.

## The Works Selected for the present Study

India is proud of its nationalistic and patriotic literature. Out of the total literature that appeared from 1857 to 1947, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Anand Math* and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's *The Indian War of Independence, 1857* are selected for discussion in this paper because of their impact on people and events.

### (i) *Anand Math*

*Anand Math* was published in the last quarter of the 19th century and *The Indian War of Independence 1857* appeared in the first decade of the 20th century. They appeared at a crucial period of our country's history.

*Anand Math* is a political novel written in Bengali. It was first published in *Bangadarshan* and later appeared as book in 1882. It was translated into English four times by different translators. They are:

i) *The Abbey of Bliss : Anand Math*, tr. by Nares Chandra Sengupta. Calcutta: Padmini Mohan Neogi, 1907, xii, 201. (vii) p; 19 cms.

ii) *Anand Math*, tr. by Sree Aurobindo and Sree Barindra Kumar Ghosh; foreward by Girija Shankar Roy Choudhuri. Calcutta: Basumati Sahitya Mandir, n.d.xii, 194 (viii) p. 2 plates; 18 cms.

(Aurobindo started English translation of *Anand Math* in the *Karmayogin* from August 14, 1909 and he completed up to 15th Chapter of Part I of the book; his brother Barindra Kumar Ghosh completed the text.)

iii) *Anand Math*, tr. by Sunrendra Mohan Choudhuri, Calcutta: Brindaban Dhar & Sons, 1947.

iv) *Dawn Over India*, tr. and adapted by Basanta Kumar Roy. New York: Devin Adair, 1941., 230 p.; 22 cms.

The different versions of translations of the book over a period of 40 years show its relevance and the reception accorded to it by the Indian public. *Anand Math* derived much of its background material from the *Sannyasi* revolt that occurred in North Bengal in 1772. Its dominating note is patriotism and revolt. It was directed against the British which were looked upon as the arch enemy of our country.

Dipti Kumar Biswas in his book *Sociology of Major Bengali Novels* said that 'Bankim Chandra's *Anand Math*, was the first expression of the patriotic sentiment' p. 30). It created a landmark in the history of Freedom Movement (p. 225). Sukumar Sen in his book *History of Bengali Literature* said that "it (*Anand Math*) gave tremendous impetus to the various patriotic and national activities culminating in the terrorist movement initiated in Bengal in the first decade of the twentieth century (p. 236).

Sri Aurobindo, while writing his revolutionary pamphlet, *Bhabani Mandir* in 1905 had laboured under the direct influence of *Anand Math*. The Rowlett Committee report said that, "it will be remembered that the pamphlet *Bhabani Mandir* has set out the aims and objectives of the revolutionaries. It was remarkable in more ways than one... The central idea as to a given religious order is taken from the well-known novel *Anand Math* of Bankim Chandra."

The novel contained Bankim's immortal song *Vande Mataram*.

"Vande Mataram  
Sujalam Suphalam Malayajasitalam  
Sasyasyamalam Mataram  
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Rabindranath Tagore said that "during the days of the partition of Bengal, it was but too patent to the Government that the national *mantra* 'Vande Mataram' was the most powerful of forces behind the awakening of the nation. They, therefore, banned the cry". Jawaharlal Nehru said that "Vande Mataram is obviously and indisputably the premier national song of India, with great historical tradition and intimately connected with our struggle for freedom".

The song reverberated throughout India from 1905 onwards. Devulapalli Venkateshwara Rao, a Telugu comrade, in his book, *Telangana Prajula Sayudha Porata Charitra (1946-1951) Part I*, described at length the impact of this song on the Indian politics and its use in their fight against the Nizam as late as 1936-1940. Martyrs from generation to generation faced the gallows with the radiance of *Vande Mataram* on their lips.

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee through his works was able to create a nation. His song *Vande Mataram* still has political potential.

## (ii) The Indian War of Independence

*The Indian War of Independence* was originally

written in Marathi by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in April 1908. It went through thrilling vicissitudes before it was printed. Savarkar himself said that he wrote the book to inspire people with a burning desire to rise again and wage a second and a successful war to liberate India from the British yoke. The book deals with the events of 1857. No press in Maharashtra dared to print the volume. The Indian police carried a number of simultaneous surprise raids on the printing presses in Maharashtra to confiscate the manuscript.

The manuscript was finally smuggled to Paris. Savarkar's friends tried to get the Marathi edition of the book printed in Germany where Sanskrit literature used to be published in the script. But the scheme was later given up as Nagari type cast in Germany was not found. Thereupon it was resolved to publish an English translation of the work. The Marathi edition of *The Indian War of Independence* was translated into English by W.V. Phadke under the supervision of V.V.S. Aiyer. Efforts were made by the Abhiyan Bharat group to get it published in London. The Scotland Yard detectives made a hot pursuit to seize it. They described the book as revolutionary explosive and seditious. The British and Indian Governments had hurriedly proscribed the book which they admitted was not yet published. *The Indian War of Independence* was the first book in the history of world literature which was banned even without seeing a copy of it by the censors.

The book appeared in 10 editions and was published in almost all Indian languages. Information on the various editions is as follows :

First published in England	19
Second edition (Published in Holland with the efforts of Madam Cama)	19
Third edition (published in USA with the efforts of Lala Hardayal)	19
Fourth edition (published from Lahore)	1
Fifth edition (published in Japan with the efforts of Ras Behari Bose)	1
Sixth edition (published from Bombay)	1
Seventh edition (published from Poona)	1
Eighth edition (no information)	
Ninth edition (published from New Delhi)	1
Tenth edition (published by Rajdhani Granthagar, New Delhi)	

The various editions of the book over the la

years and its publication in different Indian languages show the popularity of the book. It had inspired the founders of the Ghadr Party and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Dhananjay Keer in his biography of V.D. Savarkar said :

"Echoes and effects of the great work were visible in 1914. It inspired the Second War of Indian Independence in 1914. Leaders of the Ghadr Party who published the book and spread the message raised the *Kamagatamaru* rebellion. They had read the book with a religious zeal and had drawn undying inspiration from the work. Bhagat Singh and his colleagues brought out an underground edition in 1928 to feed the flames of revolution and finance their party. They regarded the great book as the *Geeta* of revolutionaries".

K.F. Nariman wrote in 1943 in *Free Hindustan* weekly that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had "the idea of the I.N.A. and particularly the Rani of Jhansi Regiment...from Veer Savarkar's proscribed publication on the great 1857 Revolution and Mutiny.

Nyapathi Subha Rao, the editor of *Gosthi* wrote in 1946 : "The British Raj in India has treated Savarkar's book as most dangerous for their existence here. So it has been banned. But it has been read by millions of our countrymen".

People were travelling during the Freedom Struggle, 60 to 80 miles to read this book stealthily. The demand for its copies was so great that they used to be sold and resold, in cases, for such fabulous price as 300 rupees each. Thousands of the arrested revolutionaries were found in possession of them. The book was animatedly read by Indian revolutionaries and patriots.

Both *Anand Math* and *The Indian War of Independence*, whether one agrees or not with their ideology, were widely read in spite of their non-availability in libraries because of the ban. They created a political awakening which was later deftly used by Mahatma Gandhi for his non-violent mass struggle against the British.

## Conclusion

i) Gutenberg's invention of movable type and Caxton's printing provided the book medium for the transfer of information and new ideas faster and conveniently from one corner to the other in the world;

ii) Books enabled the spread of education to be within the reach of all sections of society. This laid

the foundations for the democratic institutions;

iii) Books became the vehicles of social and political change. The works of Rousseau, Voltaire and Karl Marx changed the course of history and destinies of countries;

iv) The very purpose of the books, whether they are kept in libraries or not, is diffusion of knowledge and culture for the sustenance and furtherance of mankind;

v) The publication of books and their use in the libraries of a country is a symbol of a country's prosperity and civilization; and

vi) Writers are the uncrowned kings of the society. Their creativity in the form of print, film, video or audio, is collected in libraries which are information intermediaries or information gatekeepers to serve the reading public better.

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# The Book That Is My Constant Companion

K.G. Meenakshi\*

As one with very close association with the field of education, both as a teacher and an administrator, my field of interest reflected in my choice of reading has always been education. One of the books that have given me enough to think about in my search for innovative ideas that could help rejuvenate our education system is that wonderful book *Schools That Work* by George H. Wood. This book has been my constant companion whom I turn to when I fall into a mood of despair looking at the sorry state of affairs in the field of education — especially at the school level. What has appealed to me about this book is the lucid manner in which the author has projected the image of those select schools which, according to him, work towards the goal of meaningful education. As you move along with his captivating description of those special schools you can easily sense the force of conviction, the author has, in the possibility of establishing more and more of such schools that have a vision stretching beyond the four walls of the classroom.

I am sure those few who are interested in generating a dynamic, vibrant and learner — centred education system, would find this book absorbing. The reader is taken through Hubbard Woods Elementary School, Central Park East Secondary School, Fratney Street Elementary School, Thayer Junior/Senior Higher Secondary School, Chauncey Elementary School and Amesville Elementary School, which the moment you step in, make you feel that they are schools with a difference. They do not fall into a straight jacket pattern of conventional schools. Even at the beginning the author warns you that you are in for surprises and unorthodox systems that might throw you off your balance by the sheer vitality of their informality. These are schools to do things and not places to sit and watch.

It is indeed a delightful journey that takes you round the country, taking you to see the schools that work. You meet in the course of your journey teachers with a remarkable sense of commitment who are engaged in education — for the basics of

“democratic citizenship”. The author makes a satirical remark about the reform movement (in America) by referring to the “legislated excellence” movement, which he says should make attainment of excellence still more difficult.

What makes the book interesting to Indian readers is its relevance to the educational scenario in the country where those at the helm of affairs try to regulate education by introducing mandatory specifications for every aspect of it including curriculum. Decrying the concept of legislated excellence, he says, it amounts to mere quantitative increases — “more and more of school time, more of core subjects and more of testing.” This sounds very familiar to us.

We derive consolation from the fact that the picture drawn by the author about school education in general in U.S. does not seem to be in any way better than ours — in both teaching and testing are geared to textbooks.

But the author has found an oasis of excellent educational activities in the wilderness of average mediocre education — the schools that work. Do we have such an oasis in our country to give us hope for a better future?

The author’s pithy statement “Everyone is expected to do the same thing at the same time in the same way” brings out the curse of our system — undue emphasis on uniformity.

Having given a graphic account of the state of affairs in school education he asks himself “why do we rush to impose uniform solutions to ununiform school houses? Why do we take away from students some of the most exciting school experience they will have and spend millions on testing programmes that will do little to improve public education?” This brings out his genuine concern for recreating classrooms that make learning alive. You are in total agreement with him when he says that ‘education for democratic citizenship is most at risk in our school’. Though the author’s reference is to schools in America it reflects the state of affairs in our country as well.

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The mood of despair gives place to a sense of euphoria as you are taken down on a tour to those schools that work. You meet teachers from whom you can learn how to make schools good.

What struck me most was the fact that the schools the author has chosen as a role model, are from different sociological and economic environment — rural south eastern Ohio in the Appalachian mountain foot hills with its poverty hidden in its scenic beauty, New York City's Harlem Centre of black culture. New Hampshire that does not spend much on education, the suburb of Winnetka north of Chicago where high income and gun culture co-exist, and so on. Yet they have one thing in common. As the author puts it, "they hold in their midst a national treasure, the keys to our future as a democratic republic — schools that are for democracy".

What have these schools done to be labelled by the author as successful schools?

The suspense is broken once you step into Joette Weber's second grade classroom in Chauncey, Ohio. The pumpkin project is on. You see students gathered round an orange mass sitting on a scale — measurements are recorded and observations made starting with the pumpkin, through a session of questions — the kids encouraged to stretch their knowledge beyond the object, go to discuss soil nutrients and finally the universal law of life. "Everything gets born, grows, dies and just rots away, Even us, I think" says Shawna, a soft spoken child who has been keenly observing the experiment.

Marcia Burchby is a resourceful teacher and her first graders greet you with a feast for the eyes. There is a display of what the children have produced. You cannot miss the display for the kids will see to it that you don't miss their handiwork. No one could miss the underlying note that those kids are the masters of what they do. Says Marcia "I want these to begin to learn how to choose what they read or write, to work together and to have some control over their lives". Indeed they are collaborators in the learning process.

Bill Elasky's sixth graders in Amseville call themselves "Water Chemists". They are engaged in a study of their area, streams and creeks. Water testing is their project. How does a project usually start? It is always an answer to a simple question Bill Elasky has asked them — "What would you guys like to study?" To use the author's expressive

language, this has exploded into a project that covers all of sixth grade curriculum. It speaks volumes of the initiative and drive of the teacher and absorbing interest of the children, which have made the project a serious affair — testing water quality in the area. What is more, the group is now the most reliable source of information on water quality.

The author takes us to Winnetka School district to see Hubbard Woods Elementary School working under the dynamic Principal Dick Streedain. To the traditional school teacher and students who walk in and walk out as the bell sounds, it would look odd to see Mr. Dick walking into the school at 7.15 well before the official starting of the school at 9 a.m. Very soon the 'early birds' begin to arrive. A variety of activities await those kids who are interested. The brain storming session arranged among the teachers helps to find solutions to their problems and set priorities. The author pays tribute to the school by describing it as the type of community that makes democracy possible. The school is indeed a community of learners.

It is interesting to note that these schools do not fall into a blueprint variety. If you are looking for an organized school with a rigid curriculum which has to be completed within a time frame with the students made to sit facing the teacher as passive listeners, then these 'Schools that work' are the dissenters, or perhaps, the rebels, for they don't believe in being organised and disciplined as conventional schools are. They are quite disorganized with a curriculum designed by the learners. What is tested is not the quantum of matter learnt but the interest and love for learning. These schools are the odd-men-out in an environment that calls for high grades, standardised curriculum and quantum testing. These schools often have to face pressure from parents who want their children to do well in high schools and then in colleges 'leading to high-status profession' as the author puts it. Here I am reminded of our parents who expect the schools to equip their children to join the race for professional growth.

It is an exhilarating experience to go through the educational programmes of Central Park East Secondary School (CPESS). A group of students is engaged in a project on nutrition. Even at this age, (sixth grade) they are encouraged to observe, research and make findings. Their work includes measuring and calculating calories in various foods and researching the differences in eating habits over generations. When the author takes you to CPESS

you feel as though you are entering a new world. The science wing bubbles with students' experiments. There are models and charts and books. Yet another team of students is tackling a difficult problem in Maths. We are struck with wonder when we see the students trying to construct their own instruments for measuring the movements of stars and planets.

We generally nurture a feeling that innovative experiments in education cannot and will not succeed in schools in which the students are drawn from poor families. But 75% of CPESS students are from poor families. They also come from various ethnic groups which are not usually successful in New York school system and yet the author says that the CPESS students are successful in these standardized tests. Dropouts are practically nil. When you follow the kids through the day, you see excitement in their eyes as they prepare a video or build instruments for measuring. Can you imagine a school where students are seldom seen reading textbooks but are busy working in groups and engaging themselves in a variety of tasks!

To our question what makes this possible, the author's answer is that two things make this possible — one, the sense of community the kids share, and the other, a narrowed yet richer curriculum. Curriculum development in CPESS is thematic in refreshing contrast to our traditional way of designing a curriculum of facts and figures. While the students of social sciences of our schools are weighed down by endless names and dates and events to be put to memory, in CPESS the seventh graders concentrate on contemporary political history with emphasis on history of the United States and take up peopling of America when they move on to eighth grade. Then they take up study of comparative system of law and Government. You don't find them struggling with names and dates to be memorised and reproduced.

An introduction to Thayer School takes you to a relaxed atmosphere "where the students", as the author puts it, "are not lugged around sets of books, racing from room to room". This is in sharp contrast to ordinary schools (wherever they might be), where the students are put through a rigid daily schedule. The author has a dig at those who use school for manufacturing passive crowds taking orders and following a preset agenda as he puts it.

What makes these special schools a category by themselves is that their classrooms are more a community than a mere collection of students. At Frat-

ney, specific time is set aside for a discussion of the problems the kids have and in the course of finding a solution rules are made and decisions taken. This gives the students participatory role in class management.

When you enter David Smith's classroom in CPESS you are struck by the spirit of community that is the hallmark of these schools. In this democratic atmosphere the kids are trained, as the author puts it, to care for others and learn to give precedence to common good over what is good for the individual. When you read this you are left with a feeling of sadness that it is this spirit that is conspicuous by its absence in our education at all levels right from primary to college. It is highly significant that in these special schools even the five to eight year olds are encouraged to get together to discuss their problems and take up the responsibility for taking decisions. The author refers to one such case in the primary forum at Chauncey Elementary School which makes very interesting reading.

The matter under discussion raised by the kids themselves is how to stop kids being pushed on the slide. The children in all seriousness discuss ways and means to stop this — suggestions are made and discussed — can those who indulge in pushing the kids be made to stand against the wall? or, shall we take away their recess? — the kids think of various alternatives. Finally, they arrive at the conclusion that it is the absence of adults on the scene that leads to such cases of pushing. The most delightful thing about the episode is that the kids finally decide to stop playing until they could stop this on the slide. This gives us an insight into the philosophical foundations of these schools — schools that strive to inculcate in the young minds a sense of responsibility, a sense of togetherness, and a spirit of community.

What has Melani Zwalinski got to say about the community spirit built at Thayer? "In addition to the push to get kids think well, we have got to really concentrate on the social, emotional aspects of these kids as well to prepare them to go into a world that does seem pretty lonely and unkind and cold" says she. An exposure to these schools makes you think of the need to create the proper climate for real learning to take place. The schools chosen by Wood as the ones that really work, give top priority to creating the climate in which alone all the achievements become possible. Though the term 'climate' may defy definition, you really get a feel of it when you see Dennis and a group of teachers at Thayer greet every student "the moment he/she walks into



the room". A wave of thrill runs in you as the author takes you round the classrooms. As against the 'emotionally flat classroom', to use author's description of the conventional classrooms, the classrooms in these schools are places of active learning and doing real things.

Bill Elasky and his sixth graders are out in the wooded Appalachian valley in search of the place where there is supposed to be some strange looking water. This is their outdoor classroom. Let us follow them and see how Bill makes the best use of the journey to the creek. The students learn about forest life, new growth, insects, plant variety etc. It is the most exciting class in Bio-sciences. The students finally locate the spot, collect water samples, make notes on the surrounding area. Back in school they are busy performing tests, labelling samples and storing them. "This is great, it is being like a scientist", says one of the boys. Anyone present there cannot but share their joy of learning. You are in total agreement with the author when he says that the physical environment in the class sets the stage for everything that goes on in the name of teaching and learning. As the author puts it, in classrooms with desks arranged in straight lines, the teaching methodology is bound to be lecture, dictation and recitation. This will not and cannot foster a real learning process.

The author hastens to add that teachers involved in such experimental activities face the problem of fitting their learning projects into the standardised mandated forms prescribed by the authorities. But a resourceful teacher like Bill Elasky can devise ways to 'shoe horn' (to quote the author) his system into the mandated pattern.

What goes on in our schools today is an artificial programme finely tuned to the parameters of an outdated testing system, whereas the classrooms in Thayer or CPSS are places where what is produced by the student is meaningful and are designed with a "real audience". A tradition bound teacher will be tempted to raise the question of discipline in an environment which is activity oriented. But to Bill Elasky it is not a problem at all. He is not bothered by the noise the kids make in the class for he knows that noise is inevitable when the students are engaged in a hands-on experience session and group work involving a lot of interaction. But this noise, he says, means something to the students who are "excited about getting their ideas across".

As you reach the end of the book you feel sad

that you are nearing the end of a very exciting journey that has taken you round those schools, which as the author says, really work, and where you have met people who make it work. You have also met students — right from first graders who are members of a community of learners.

To the pessimist who would look at those schools as impossible ideals, the author's answer is "If people can go so far as to change the world there is no reason why we cannot change the schools".

Often, I sit ruminating over the state of affairs in our educational institutions which makes us wonder where we are heading towards. I am sure somewhere in some corners of our country there is Bill Elasky, a Joette Weber, a Dick Streedain engaged in innovative meaningful educational activities that would help our children to grow as democratic citizens. But the country needs more and more teachers of this calibre. How do we train our teachers? George H. Wood has given us a treasure house and I don't think you need anything more to inspire all those who have the spark in them that only needs to be ignited.

I recommend this book to those who are interested in giving our education system a new focus.

## UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW M.SC. TECH PHARMACEUTICAL CHEMISTRY PROGRAMME

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# The Novel of Novels

## Rushdie's "Midnight's Children"

K. Venkata Reddy\*

It is quite heartening to note that Salman Rushdie, the world-famous novelist living under an Iranian death-threat, accused of blasphemy against Islam on account of his recent novel, *Satanic Verses*, has won the "Booker of Bookers" award, marking the 25th anniversary of Britain's most prestigious literary prize (*The Hindu*, Sept. 22, 1993). This is the greatest compliment paid to him as a writer. Rushdie got this most coveted award on the basis of his 1981 novel, *Midnight's Children*, which was adjudged "the best of the books that have won the annual Booker prize since 1968." To his own surprise, Rushdie has been picked from a list of Booker winners including such stalwarts as Kingsley Amis, Iris Murdoch, William Golding and Nadine Gordimer.

But, those who have fully grasped the extraordinary scale and fertility of *Midnight's Children* — its span of styles from free buoyant fantasy to murderous social invective, its mixture of radical aesthetic experiment and political courage, its power of illuminating the English language with the metaphors, myths and sheer loquacities of Indian writing — are not surprised over the kind of distinction that has been bestowed on it. What makes the novel so extraordinarily important and so vertiginously exciting a reading experience is "the way it takes in not just the whole appercept of India and the problem of being a novel about India, but the business of being a novel at all" (Valentine Cunningham in *TLS*). What is more, it burgeons with life, exuberance and fantasy. It has the same effect on the eyes and ears of the reader as a magnificent circus performance — a scene that is filled with colour, zest, daredevilry and loud bravado. Small wonder, therefore, if *Midnight's Children* was unanimously received both in India and abroad with an overwhelming and breathless mood of acclaim and a spontaneous overflow of enthusiasm.

Rushdie himself has corroborated this view, when in an interview he was asked to explain the extraordinary success of *Midnight's Children*. He

said that the appeal for the Western readers lay in the adventurous, the exotic, the comic, the unexpected and the strange. So, for the West, especially Britain and the United States, it is not only the colourful fictional world of *Midnight's Children*, but, to a high degree, the exoticist image of India itself that accounts for the literary quality and sensational success of the novel.

Few novels in recent years have unleashed so much praise and criticism as Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* did when it won the 1981 Booker McConnell Award. According to the *New York Times*, the novel "sounds like a continent finding its voice." *The New York Review of Books* hailed it as "an extraordinary novel" that incorporates "the stupendous Indian past with its pantheon, its epics, and its wealth of folklore and fairy tales, while at the same time playing a role in the tumultuous Indian present."

*Midnight's Children* marks quite a radical departure from what has been written by Indian novelists in English to date. With the exception of writers like G.V. Desani, Raja Rao and Sudhin Ghose, Indian writing in English has not been overly concerned with experimentation. *Midnight's Children* differs from this earlier fiction in that most of the usual ground rules associated with the older form of fiction are broken. The unities of time and place and character are, at best unstable. The narrative fluctuates uncertainly between first and third person. What is more, ordinary notions of fictional realism are subverted, natural law becomes unnatural or supernatural even though the novel is not in any straightforward sense religious or metaphysical. The novel is full of cryptic clues, archaic utterances, and seems always on the point of offering some important explanation and of arriving at some goal or conclusion. But what this conclusion is we can never be quite sure. It is a novel of signs and gestures and sleight-of-hand, narrated with a passion for narrating rather than for clarifying meaning.

In writing *Midnight's Children*, the novelist's avowed purpose is "to relate private lives to public events and to explore the limits of individuality in a country as big, as populous and culturally vari-

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egated as India." *Shame* does the same thing for Pakistan, to some extent. Rushdie is "centrally involved" with "aspects of the most crucial critical/theoretical debates of his day." He is deeply concerned with the politics of the Indian subcontinent, and his commitment and sense of urgency are really remarkable. He presents realities of public history influencing, and getting influenced by, individuals' actions and aspirations, with exceptional honesty.

*Midnight's Children* is Rushdie's interpretation of a period of about seventy years in India's modern history dealing with the events leading to the partition and beyond. It encapsulates the experiences of three generations of the Sinai family, living in Srinagar, Amritsar and Agra and then in Bombay, and, finally, migrating to Karachi. Saleem Sinai, the narrator engaged in the actual writing of the story, works at a pickle factory by day and records his experiences by night, hoping that "one day, perhaps, the world may taste the pickles of history."

The novel has an epic sweep extending in time and space, covering some six decades, and the entire Indian subcontinent and its history. Though the narrative chronologically covers over a period of sixty three years (from the spring of 1915 to 1978) it effectively begins in the midnight of August 15, 1947 and ends again on the midnight of August 15, 1978. Thus, Time is cyclical and regenerative. It ends where it begins. The temporal world is hoisted with a momentous urgency and resolved in an open-ending manner.

Like *Grimus*, *Midnight's Children* is tripartite in structure, presenting a cross-section of humanity, of Indians, Muslims, Anglo-Indians. Book one covers the time from Jallianwallah Bagh upto Saleem's birth on August 15, 1947; Book Two up to the end of the Indo-Pakistan war in September 1963; and Book Three up to the end of Emergency in March 1977. Rushdie succeeds in presenting the past and the present of Saleem in alternating bits of narration in a captivating manner. We find in the novel virtually all of the twentieth century Indian history — the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, Quit India movement, Cabinet Mission, freedom movement, Muslim League and its role, riots and bloodshed subsequent to the Independence, Five Year Plans, reorganisation of Indian states and language riots, Chinese aggression, the theft of the sacred relic from the Hazratbal mosque, Pakistan war, liberation of Bangladesh, the Emergency and various other his-

torically important events. There are also typically Indian divisions and dissents, chaos and disillusion, communal tensions, religious fanaticism besides traditional values and modernizing efforts. All these are "preserved" in the novel to evoke the truth of India and make the novel, in Maria Couto's words, "an extraordinary saga of epic dimensions and resonances."

In *Midnight's Children*, the 'Children' stand for humanity in the essentialist sense of the word. They are exposed to strong political (and other) forces which strip them of their illusions, alienate them from others and from themselves for a short time and finally exterminate them. Saleem Sinai, the symbol of the human spirit, retires to the privacy of a retired life. Politics now leaves him alone because, like the others, he acquiesces to its demands. His individuality has been eliminated and the moral courage which is imperative for opposing tyrannical government is no longer there.

*Midnight's Children* is alternately classified and characterized as "a picaresque novel," "a very modernist mixture of naturalist background and surrealist foreground," "an eminently political novel between myth, irony, magic and the flair of an oriental fairy-tale," "a political elegy on disappointed hopes," and as "a continuation of Indian oral traditions combined with a superb handling of the Western novel genre." It has been observed and praised that Rushdie does not present a cynical image of India as V.S. Naipaul has done with his two novels — *An Area of Darkness* (1964) and *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977). Instead, Salman Rushdie is said to present, almost immerse the reader in a throbbing, pulsating, warm-blooded, colourful world.

The ingredients of the "European" novel — realism, satire, structural unity, fantasy, prophecy, pattern and rhythm can all be traced in *Midnight's Children*, but they are colourfully overgrown or, as it were, interwoven into the pattern of a magic carpet, by the pungent spices of the Indian cuisine: analogy, repetition of the same ambiguity. The result as a novel that is at the same time a carefully constructed allegory for artistic creation, "chutneyfication," selection, preservation and spicing of reality, and a magic tale of 1001 children, 1001 episodes, anecdotes, 1001 adventures, told by Saleem, the protagonist, who is man, demon and demi-god in one, a male Scheherazade, "an Indian Tin-drummer straight out of the *Ramayana*".

# A Reading of Donald Davie's "The Shires"

Mithilesh Kumar Pandey\*

The *Collected Poems* 1971-83 opens with the *The Shires* which can be appropriately regarded as Davie's *Pisan Cantos* in view of its thematic as well as stylistic similarities with the great epic of Ezra Pound. Bernard Bergonzi<sup>1</sup> referred to Larkin's love for typical landscapes and contrasted it with Davie's obsession with specific landscapes and locales. This poem-sequence comprising forty pieces, one each on forty counties, arranged alphabetically, which comprised England and continued as separate political units as late as 1972. Davie's assignments in various universities in England and in Ireland besides the trans-Atlantic commitments in the United States better equipped him to meditate in the glory of England. The exiled sensibility renders the poet dispassionate and his observations about his motherland are marked by a unique authenticity. Davie's ambitious poem is marvellous in several ways. Besides being an orchestration of poetic virtues which marked this collection of poems, it points to the keen and observant eye of the poet who is gifted with a delicate though tenacious memory. In recapitulating the association of different Shires with the great literary giants who belonged to them Davie's power of historical imagination is extraordinarily demonstrated. The poem as a whole can be looked upon as Davie's final quest to ascertain his 'patria'.

Being the first major poem since the publication of *Collected Poems* 1950-70 in 1972, *The Shires* represents Davie's expanding poetic range where he moves on to redefine himself both as a poet and an Englishman with reference to cosmopolitan experiences he has amassed. This long autobiographical poem ironically reaffirms the insularity of the Movement Davie inasmuch as it celebrates his English roots. The poem was not favourably received when it first appeared and was termed "an oddly misconceived venture" and the poet was accused of 'tourism' in his own country. Such adverse comments betray the misunderstanding of its form and structure. This serious and sustained effort at a longer poem with Pound's elliptical style as its po-

etic model had its own challenges in an age of fragmented sensibility and its success should be measured in those terms. Since the publication of Basil Bunting's *Briggflatts* in 1966, *The Shires* is the most fascinating long poem grappling with English themes. That Bunting's poem had deep imprint on Davie's mind is borne by the fact that he has titled his recent critical history of British poetry as *Under Briggflatts* published in 1989. To approach the poem as a collection of forty independent pieces is to miss its spirit because it is an extended and unified poem in forty discrete sections where politics and ethics intersect with art throughout the sequence. Though written from the perspective of an *emigre* the poem should not be treated as a travel book in verse or a collection of occasional pieces where each one tries to describe or otherwise capture the atmosphere of each original English county. Containing some of Davie's finest and most personal poetry, this poem is in the nature of a personal meditation of a poet exiled by choice about his anguished relationship with his native country.

Identifying precisely the nature of this poem, Dana Gioia observes :

In a Poundian Sense *The Shires* is an epic poem. It is 'a poem containing history', not only the history of Davie's own time but also suggestions of the entire history of England bearing down on the present moment.<sup>2</sup>

Though apparently concerned with the geographical contours of England, it explores Davie's preoccupation with history inasmuch as the most of the locations referred to are places where something important happened either in British history or in the poet's personal life or quite often in both. *The Shires* begins with poem "Bedfordshire" titled after John Bunyan's County. The decision to launch this ambitious project of forty poems with Bedford as the first piece though simply alphabetical is very meaningful. Confronted with the perplexity of his own protestant dissenting past, Davie here distinguishes it from the heroic protestantism of Bunyan and associates with the "Dissenting nineteenth century demureness" of the brigchapels of Bedfordshire. The confessional passage at the very start can be aptly reproduced :

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I have never known  
What to do with this that I am heir to.<sup>3</sup>

The preoccupation with his protestant inheritance is a pronounced feature of Davie's later phase which witnessed the publication of two extremely interpretative books on religion, *A Gathered Church*, and *Dissentient Voice* besides the *English Hymnology in the 18th Century*. The phrase, "This that I am heir to" forms the title of an insightful essay by Gregory A. Schirmer in Dekker's volume on Davie and this further underlines the significance of "Bedfordshire" in the sequence.

Northumberland, in the piece of this title, is seen as the site of episodes in both the Roman and early Anglo-Saxon civilisations which have left their impact on English culture :

Centurions with their centuries, some  
thousands  
A decimal system drills to a court of ten—  
Barked to a halt when Aneurin numbered the  
dead.

(CP II, P. 33)

While Berkshire is the painful scene of the poet's own sins :

In his last months I stood him up for supper.  
That night I should have stayed with him  
I stayed talking with Christopher Middleton in  
town.  
So nowadays as the biscuit-factory flies  
Past the train-window and announces Reading,  
I keep my head down.

(Berkshire, CP II, P. 17)

Having emancipated himself from the fetters of the Movement Philistinism, Davie has suffused some poems with personal touches that lend new dimensions to his poetic universe. In his poem "Monmouthshire", Davie treats the political union of England with Wales in marital terms and to this marriage he relates his own entering into wedlock with Doreen of an Anglo-Welsh family. Intuitively endowed with a deracinated sensibility, Davie examines the cross-cultural interactions :

Anglo-Welsh : that mixture took and held  
Through centuries. My dear wife, we endorsed it:  
Our sons are quarter Welsh if they care to think  
so our brother-in-law was happy, when the  
Sappers' Reunion was in Chepstow,  
To gossip with old comrades of Cawnpore.

(CP II, P. 31)

In "Middlesex", he presents the dilemma of a writer torn between two cultures. The scene of the poem is

abroad with one exile listening to the agony of another. Its central theme is not the difference between generations but rather the moment of dispiriting experiences sharpens one's awareness of what home really is :

The longer loop their odysseys, the more warmly  
exact the Ithakas they remember :

Thus, home she said was Middlesex, though  
Wembley

I should have named, indifferently, as 'London'.

(CP, II, P. 31)

Davie regards London as city untypical of England despite being the intellectual, political and cultural centre of the nation because it is the confluence of various native streams with unique identities.

Davie's stint at Essex forms the basis of his poem named after this place. His stay coincided with the feared politicisation in British universities between 1966 and 68 when he was the pro-Vice Chancellor at the University of Essex. This devastating experience which finally culminated in his decision to leave England altogether for a chair at the University of Stanford, still resounds in his poetry. Writing of the county in "Essex", he notes :

Constable's country merits  
Better than I can give it  
who have unfinished business  
there, with my own failures.

(CP II, P. 24)

His professional 'failures' either as an administrator or teacher do not surface in the poem. His grudge against the general ambience within the University did get reflected in several poems included in the *Essex Poems* (1969), as in "January" :

Diatribes and  
Denunciation, where  
I spend my days...<sup>4</sup>

The specific crisis at Essex University, torn by sit-ins, seems merely an instance in Davie's thinking of a general malaise affecting the culture of England, too susceptible to grotesque alien influences.

In *The Shires*, Davie has created a personal and contemporary image of his native land. It is his characteristic that he should give distinction to the old founders of his modern nation, corrupt or heroic, Walpole or Nelson. His "Norfolk" ends with an international comparison :

Who answers for the double  
Aspect of genius, arcing  
From Corsica or Norfolk ?

(CP II, P.32)



Characteristic also is his "Rutland" which is dedicated to an Anglo-Californian of Dutch descent, George Dekker. The poem records the smallest and now abolished county of England and underlines its inherent pathos. The poet has encompassed issues as wide as the question of 'false refinement' in life and art ("Lincolnshire") and that of the escape of the English into idyllic fantasy consequent upon the loss of imperial power in "Shropshire":

Things change. Gone now the troublesome  
chores of Empire  
That might earn such indulgences. We've seen,  
Belly and I, our fractions nation tire  
Too soon of holding Suva for the Queen.  
(CP II, Pp. 35-6)

The change in political boundary resulted in the shrinkage of the glory of British empire and this leads Davie to meditate over the change in human psyche as well. In his "The most poeticised of English counties", Sussex, he feels now 'the brain drain', the frequent migration of intellectuals to other countries in search of better career prospects has left its impact on human behaviour as well:

'Brain-drain' one hears no more of,  
And there's no loss. There is  
Another emigration:  
Draining away love.  
(CP II, P. 39)

In "Hampshire", the poet recalls his meeting with Doreen for the first time when he reported to join the Navy at Fareham outside Portsmouth. In his memoirs, he comments on this poem:

A few years ago I put this into a poem called 'Hampshire', thinking it of anthropological value at least to have it recorded that in the middle of the twentieth century the two cultures inside England could still be experienced so vividly as indeed at almost all points distinct.<sup>5</sup>

The description of his courtship with Doreen is romantic in its associations:

An educated girl, she recognized  
The bracken where we stood  
Alone together in a woodland ride,  
And took 'argute' on trust.  
(CP II, P. 25)

The last poem of the sequence, "Yorkshire" is devoted to Davie's own native shire. Here the poet acknowledges the Latin graces that is northern and also aggressively protestant that the heritage lacks. Speaking of the southern "Angevin" names not commonly given to girls in the families among which he grew up, he acknowledges his need for a

southern Latin grace:

Eleanor rather, Alix, ladies of Latins,  
I call you down. (And Mary, Mother of  
Heaven?)  
Justice and prudence (Prue, a name not given  
North of the Trent), courage, and Temperance  
were  
Your erudite names, mothers of Latin earth.  
(CP II, P. 42)

That not-quite invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is significant. It indicates not only an opening to the claims of Catholic Christianity as somehow providing for the deficiencies of Protestantism but also an opening to the notion that the future of the English language and English-speaking culture is rather bleak. The remedy lies in connecting it again to the spiritual and cultural energies that built Europe in the first place.

No discussion of *The Shires* would be complete without lingering a little on the various dimensions and determinants of the theme of deracination which has emerged as a potent force in contemporary literature. What was denegated as 'the culture mongering activities' by Larkin and Amis in the fifties has come to stay as a phenomena to reckon with. The declassed artists, have to subject themselves to either of the two effects of exile — obsessive nostalgia for the homeland or the bitter dismissal of it — at creative level. The former renders the artist completely an exile who mentally lives and breathes his homeland though physically present in another country. They are unable to ever 'go native' in any real sense. Davie belongs to this category of exiled writers whose homesickness grows intenser and keener with his longer stay abroad. The writers gripped by negative nostalgia for their roots are always on the look out to condemn it in most severe terms. V.S. Naipaul belongs to this category of *Emigre* artists as he debunks his Hindu past in his writings. Looking in retrospect, it can be succinctly deduced that Davie's short stay in Ireland inculcated in him the typical Celtic love and *The Shires* is the manifestation of it.

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# SRI VENKATESWARA UNIVERSITY

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# Saul Bellow's 'The Dean's December'

## A Work of Modern Zeitgeist

Chakrapal Singh Yadav\*

A great transcendental novel by Bellow is *The Dean's December* (1982) which, in the words of Stephen Miller, "is brimming with important ideas yet inert as a work of fiction."<sup>1</sup> Its main interest lies primarily in measuring the state of a new world order, with the models of beings that serve to determine our places in it, with all the past and present ideas. If a novel is an investigation of existence, the sense of the embodiment of philosophical reflection in it is not unwarranted. This is true of this novel. It serves to illuminate man's concrete being. Its protagonist feels puzzled over the ethical outrage he sees as dead in the contemporary times. His concern is that he does not find appropriate relationship to the sum of things — the relationship based on ethical notions and capable of sustaining harmonious and constructive living in the society. The word 'December' expresses the tone of coldness and extinction of what is good and moral. This tone is complex, a mixture of engaged imaginative investment in the perceived history. "A certain sense of victimisation and a more articulate need to justify and also to question this theme clearly haunts *The Dean's December*."<sup>2</sup> It is a fictional work, serious, solemn and of self 'dialogue'. It is a tale of two cities — Bucharest and Chicago — the former noted for its institutionalised life and the latter for destructive fury and death, but in both no one is allowed to present his personal account of perceptions against the systems and concepts that govern their administrative framework.

Albert Corde, the protagonist, is a man of feeling and explores the place of his soul which feels. He knows his own complicity yet he encounters to discover fundamental human nature. He was a journalist earlier and reported political matters. Now he is the professor of journalism and Dean in the University of Chicago and lives in the world of ideas, poetry and criticism. Minna is his Romanian wife, educated in Astrophysics in a communist country and now working in America to escape the containments of the communist politics. Her

mother, Valeria, former Minister of Health, once purged, is now partly rehabilitated. Two events in the lives of this couple bring out before them two primary versions of modern social order — the pleasure — power order of America with its toughness to control under-classes, and the totalitarian order of communism with its force to suppress the citizens.

Once Corde writes two articles for the *Harper's* on the conditions prevailing in Chicago. He exposes therein how the skyscrapers rise over the derelict lots and how the bourgeois triple-lock their doors to protect the Byzantine wealth and life. He also presents in the articles the rising crime rate, the corruption in the prisons, hospitals and other institutions, the liberal inertia, violence and abuse. This makes him unpopular among his friends and relatives. Just after this, one of the students, Rickie Lester, for whom he is responsible as the Dean, is murdered for racial and sexual reasons by two blacks, Lucas Ebry and Riggie Hines. Corde insists on investigation into the case and conviction of the two culprits. This aggravates the situation because his own nephew, Mason, is also involved in this matter. Hence, Corde has to face many adversaries, such as his sister, Elfrida, nephew Mason, professors, journalists, lawyers, men of his social circle. He is also called a racist so as to cover his opposition to the blacks.

Later Corde and Minna go to Bucharest to visit Valeria, Minna's mother, who is on death bed. She is in the government hospital where contact with the dying patient, though blocked, is manipulated with the K.G.B. Colonel with great difficulty. Bucharest is highly institutionalised and dominated by surveillance and politics of pain. There Corde is virtually a prisoner in the family apartment. Then he attends the bleak official burial of his mother-in-law and hears from the Colonel about Minna's defection and western decadence. When he returns to Chicago, he finds no option but to settle at Mount Palomer observatory, where Minna is employed. Hence these two deaths, with which Corde is associated, become a source for him to understand what human condition prevails in the modern world of

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technological advance.

An analysis of the contemporary conditions reveals that there is no inborn capacity in man to know what is good. The virtues namely disinterested outlook, concern for the community, a sense of outrage at injustice which man learnt in the past, were offered to him by ancient classical civilizations such as the Greek, the Roman, the English. Since whatever is old is disappearing, the new order can have no vision of them. The present ethics in the West has its source in these guiding tenets : a romantic sense of the uncivilized real in the under-classes; the Darwinian law of the jungle : power based on wealth and politics; scientific analysis. All historical descriptions are restricted by these ideologies and they are responsible for ethical chaos and degradation of the self and society.

In Bucharest there is a clear distinction between power and powerlessness, which may be discerned in the tensions created by the impending death of Valeria. Tremendous efforts have to be made to obtain the best help for the dying old lady. Corde sees all this and finds a sharp contrast between Valeria and the KGB Colonel — the former representing old privilege and the latter new power. The elderly people show their concern and sympathy for the dying woman while the young lack such attitudes. Some of these people work as spies for the government, while some other work secretly or send messages to help friends of the old order. These persons cannot oppose the totalitarian state as "they fill in the spaces left by an informal form of Government and make themselves visible by attending in large numbers the funerals of the heroes of the old order."<sup>3</sup> These ancient folk adhere to the concepts of loyalty and justice and know what is good and right. Corde has also read the classics and the writers such as Plato, Aristotle, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Nietzsche, Rilke and others, and knows how they advocate such virtues as liberty, equality, justice. But he laments that the western tradition uses them only as drapery to hide the rejection of this tradition by people at every level of society. His dying mother-in-law, Valeria, is also connected with old virtues. She has been regarded as traditional, even archaic, as she believes in the old discipline, in the good, in the beatitude. But this aspect is not to be observed in the contemporary society, it is dead with the old or stored in libraries as dead history. Describing the communist reality, Corde observes : "A tender liberal society has to find soft ways to institutionalise harshness and

smooth it over compatibly with progress, buoyancy, so that with us when people are merciless, when they kill us, we explain that it's because they are disadvantaged, or have lead poisoning, or come from a backward section of the country, need psychological treatment."<sup>4</sup>

He calls America a pleasing society, where "conservative capitalism has to temper or conceal its position that classic conditions of competition will bring suffering and death."<sup>5</sup> In this society, ways are discovered to prevent the recognition of affliction in the face of pleasure, whereas in that of the communists, excuses are invented in exercising affliction as a necessary condition for an ideal society. In both the cases affliction exists massively and is the outcome of man's greed and sense of injustice. Corde, who supports classical virtues and condemns cruel practices, is not listened to and is considered inappropriate. Besides, his expression is inadequate before well-constructed arguments and false historical descriptions of the so-called scholars and philosophers.

Corde is baffled at the loss of ancient virtues from the contemporary life. He is equally perturbed to note that his expression is also not straight in his interviews and conversations. It is because in Rumania people are gagged to utter anything against the establishment and in Chicago names and workings of the people at the helm of affairs cannot be disclosed. Besides, media is so powerful and the historical descriptions are so plentiful to hide reality. Spangler maintains, "that anyone who tries to speak from another reality finds his mouth filled with newspaper phrases and is so horrified that he often gives up."<sup>6</sup> Hence no comment on public life, on delusion and death, on evil, on slum conditions, is allowed by the powerful.

*The Dean's December* is a fine example of quotidian human experience, of outer manifestation of social disorder. The hero of the novel is sad to see these grim realities of modern age. This is the post war zeitgeist, revealing apocalyptic and coldness of human heart. In Bucharest the protagonist is locked in a room in a foggy winter and looks out at the harsh realities of a totalitarian state, which is identical in its environment to all other peoples of the Iron Curtain. In this condition all human creatures are isolated and do not know what racket they are in. The art of spying and the act suppressing are so perfect here that no one dares to rebel. The establishment is supreme in power and allows no free-



dom to the individual. It is administered by the politics of pain. In Chicago there are violence and murder, exhibited openly by the killing of Lester by two black members of the under-classes, which live on the outskirts of this city in inhuman and oppressive conditions. The power-elite of the urban dwellings control the politics with their wealth and plot, supported by the media and the academicians. Here the scientists are occupied in imposing their own invention of lead poisoning, which may control the whole humanity by killing their sensibilities. The prevailing phenomenon of this capitalist order as may be witnessed in Chicago court rooms is of thuggery, ferocity, Philistine culture, conspir-

acy, duplicity and other ways of deceit and distortion for the sake of money, sex or power. The whole zeitgeist is icy and horrible.

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3. Joe Hall. The Dean's December : A Separate Account. *Saul Bellow Journal* Vol. 5, 1986, P. 25.
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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Proposed Dates of the Event	Title	Objective	Name of the Organising Department	Name of the Organising Secretary/ Officer to be contacted
February 19-20, 1994	National Convention on Automation of Libraries in Higher Education and Research Institutes	To provide a forum to discuss issues involved in library automation and networking of libraries	INFLIBNET Programme of UGC	Shri S.R. Thakore, Convenor, Local Organising Committee, CALIBER-94, INFLIBNET Programme, P.B. No. 4116, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad-380 009
March 23-25 1994	National Symposium on Applied Geochemistry	To provide a forum for Geochemists and other Geoscientists to share their research experiences and achievements made in this field	Department of Applied Geology, University of Madras	Dr. P. Periakali, Reader, (Convener) National Symposium on Applied Geochemistry, Department of Applied Geology, University of Madras, A.C. College Campus, Madras-600 025
May 8-12, 1994	1994 Pacific Conference on Distance Education	To share a Pacific perspective of distance education for present and future needs	The New Zealand Correspondence School	Mr. Lorraine Pells, The New Zealand Correspondence School, Private Bag, Wellington, New Zealand
June 1-3, 1994	Seventh Annual Conference of the All India Association for Educational Research	Theme : Innovations in Education	Foundations of Education, Jamia Millia Islamia	Dr (Mrs) G.M. Miyan, Reader, Department of Foundations of Education Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi-110025

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# An Inscrutable Genius & A Simple Heart

## Kanigel's Story of Ramanujan

C.S. Sunandana\*

Numbers rule the world. Telephone numbers. Fax numbers. Numbers that one fills up on a bank cheque. Numbers that one sees as the stock market quotation. Flight numbers. Hotel room numbers. Local bus numbers. Taxi numbers. Random numbers on lottery tickets and examination results. Value of a piece of real estate. The margin of votes in an election ... the list goes on ... *ad infinitum*. Life is really a practice of numbers. Even people are sometimes identified by numbers. Then : there must be a theory of numbers too. How do they add up to form bigger numbers? How do they form an orderly pattern — a series with a 'tell-tale' repetition? How do these 'series' result in trigonometric functions? Special functions?

A school boy starts counting as soon as he enters school. Goes on to learn the multiplication table by heart. The romance of numbers arouses the interest of some students early enough so they get friendly with them. There have been mathematically prodigious children — capable of multiplying big enough numbers 'just like that'. But only once in a millennium comes along a singularly gifted child — who would prove to be a mathematical genius. Such a person was born in our country 106 years ago. He is Srinivasa Ramanujan — one of the three R's of modern Indian Science — the other two being Prafulla Chandra Ray and Chandrashekara Venkata Raman.

I couldn't have possibly seen Ramanujan but one of the faces I recently saw on television resembled his one and the only passport photograph. So I have come to take this personage as my 'flesh and blood' model of Ramanujan ever since I read Robert Kanigel's biography — *The Man Who Knew Infinity — A Life of the 'Genius Ramanujan'*.<sup>1</sup> This book has stirred my imagination, made me remember other biographies I have read and inspired me to write this article.<sup>2</sup> While the book tells the story of Ramanujan in reader-friendly style, meticulously establishing the perspectives and amply whetting

the appetite for detail, the author exhibits the well-honed writing skill of a seasoned journalist, the sweep, the depth and the authenticity of an erudite scholar. What we appreciate eventually is the universal human argument of a major novelist. Books like this have the indelible impact of a novel — and the last similar book I remember reading is the biography, by Eve Curie, of her famous mother — Marie Sklodowska Curie — the discoverer of radium. I also remember the stunning one-line statement by way of an interview she gave to a persistent American journalist — "In science we must be interested in things, not in persons". It is things that happen to persons and the things persons do that set people like Ramanujan and Curie apart, and make their stories readable and re-readable like the research papers they write.

There are two keywords in the title of this book — 'infinity' and 'genius'. Merriam-Webster's dictionary clarifies 'infinity' as 'boundlessness' and 'genius' as 'a person endowed with transcendent mental superiority' or 'a person with a very high intelligence quotient' (IQ) usually in the range of 140 or above, so that one immediately knows whom the author is talking about. Kanigel tells "the story of an inscrutable intellect and a simple heart". It is the story of a clash of cultures between India and the West, of one man and his stubborn faith in his own abilities, and about what to do with a genius once you find one. While the boundlessness of the world of numbers is evident from his work, Ramanujan himself emerges as a 'self-willed, self-directed and self-made' person who was endowed with the '140 plus' IQ. One might even say that his life and work is an open notebook.

The latter half of the nineteenth century saw the birth — in various towns of British India — of men of mettle in various fields of science<sup>3</sup>, including P.C. Ray in 1861, C.V. Raman in 1888, S.K. Mitra in 1890, Birbal Sahni in 1891, J.B.S. Haldane in 1892, M.N. Saha in 1893, S.N. Bose in 1894, Salim Ali in 1896, K.S. Krishnan in 1898 and J.C. Bose in 1901. To this distinguished scroll of honour should be added : Ramanujan in 1887. Ramanujan, along with Raman and Krishnan are sons of South India — Tamil

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Nadu — Erode, Kumbakonam and Tiruchirapalli respectively — all three towns situated on/close to the banks of river Cauvery. Those were the days of fierce nationalism — the post-1857 period. In fact, Raman and Krishnan stand out as independent, indigenous scientists — in an education system that was routinely producing clerks.

Not the date of birth of Ramanujan. Twenty second day of December, Eighteen Eighty Seven. Just three days ahead of Christmas day. Who could predict that this child would one day be the Christmas gift to British mathematician G.H. Hardy in particular and to the Western mathematical world in general? Looking back, Hardy couldn't have asked for a better present from Santa Claus!

Ramanujan was — unlike the other two — Raman and Krishnan — who look to Physics — cut out for mathematics in the hoary Indian tradition that has seen Aryabhata, Bhaskara and Brahmagupta. Ramanujan, however, started with a handicap. Unlike Raman (whose father was a Physics teacher) his father was a petty clerk in a cloth shop. However, his mother influenced him in all respects. Like Raman, he too entered the portals of the Presidency College at Madras, and did independent research in his own style. This was after his initial setbacks in his scholastic career, and the port-trust clerkship. Ramanujan was all the time in school — and college — but he stubbornly refused to be 'schooled' in the conventional way because he wanted to do mathematics, the whole mathematics and nothing but mathematics. These were the hard times.

Then came the Hardy times — heralded by a ten-page letter from an unknown Hindu clerk from Madras to the well-known British mathematician G.H. Hardy in Cambridge, England. The dateline is important : Madras 16th January 1913. Pongal times. Ramanujan was asking for a fair price to his mathematical harvest. The letter requested Hardy to 'go through the enclosed paper' and 'to have my paper published' ... 'if you are convinced that there is anything of value'.

And the rest — as they say — is mathematical history. Created earlier by Jacobi who (like Ramanujan) had written to Legendre and Hermite who had written to Jacobi. Where Jacobi and Hermite succeeded, Abel — who showed that some

fifth degree equations could never be solved algebraically — didn't "make it" with Gauss.

As Kanigel succinctly puts it in the preface, "For five years (1914—1918), walled off from India, by the war, Ramanujan could remain in *strange, cold, distant England* fashioning through twenty-one major papers, *an enduring mathematical legacy*. Then he, would go home to India, to a hero's welcome, and die".

I do not think anyone could improve upon this very compact, one-sentence summary of Hardy — and post-Hardy times of Ramanujan. Strange, cold, distant England. Strange it was with no friends with whom he could discuss the way he did back home. Cold too — climatically and culturally. And distant of course, from home, parents and wife.

What exactly did Ramanujan do — when he wasn't visiting the Sarangapani temple at Kumbakonam, giving tuitions, chatting with friends, eating or sleeping? Or shall we say what did he do *even* as he was doing *all* this ... (and of course, studying the books of Loney and Carr?). We don't know for sure what was going on in his mind. But his written matter — in the form of 'Notebooks' that he was jotting down the 'thoughts of God' — identities, formulae, series, continued fractions — came to his mind just as raagas came to the mind of Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar—the noted Carnatic musician. After all, music and mathematics are both beautiful expositions of truth.

Kanigel's 'flash-back' technique works very well indeed. Sandwiching the chapter on Hardy between 'hard times' and 'Hardy times' serves two purposes : one, it helps one to become up to date with the mathematics of the time and two, to gasp in disbelief as to how someone like Ramanujan — with no access to the 'Proceedings of London Mathematical Society' or to standard books on number theory or any correspondence with peers — was able to pursue *contemporary* mathematical thought. Only Goddess Namagiri knows! Some inscrutable genius this!! We could only say Hardy and Ramanujan were born to collaborate and thus the latter has succeeded the third time round when he didn't click with Baker and Hobson. It is a curious fact that Raman was advised against going to England by the doctor who feared that the chilly English weather would affect his health. Raman



didn't regret this but considered it a blessing in disguise. Raman could make it—all by himself—in India while Ramanujan *needed* to go to England to hit the big time. Call it destiny, call it chance<sup>4</sup> but as Pasteur said, 'Chance favours the prepared mind'. And Ramanujan's mind was ever prepared. Against all odds, of excommunication, of the cold of England, of having to cook one's own food in an essentially non-vegetarian country, of having to cope with the war years with no communication with India, of having no 'personal' friends. Leisure to do mathematics was all he had ever wanted in life. And the steamer ('Nevasa') ticket to London was the passport to the 'heaven of leisure and freedom'. While he was 'ranging with delight' he was filling his notebooks — much like an enchanted poet writing his epic poem. His 'search for patrons' ended with Hardy. In his Spring garden in England bloomed many mathematical flowers — Bernoulli's numbers, Approximations to pi, i.e., the fraction  $22/7$ , Composite numbers ... All real ideas that set Ramanujan apart from whom Kanigel calls "mathematical technicians" plenty of whom Hardy had known.

The trinity of 'bachelors' — Hardy a natural one, Littlewood, who would prove the proverb 'celibacy is no virtue' to the hilt and Ramanujan the 'forced one' — ruled the mathematical world from the Trinity College at Cambridge. Kanigel's portrayal of Hardy is as a man whose major task was to discover Ramanujan. What is lost sight of is the fact that Hardy is one of the major thinkers of the 20th century.<sup>5</sup> His contributions include Hardy-Weinberg Law - that in a large population where mating is random, the proportion of dominant and recessive genes remains constant in succeeding generations unless some outside force such as selection, mutations and migration disturb the equilibrium and transform the population. Besides affirming the natural selection as the primary mechanism of evolution, this law enables medical scientists to predict the probability of defective offspring from human matings, geneticists to study problems including Rh blood group distribution and hemolytic diseases, and, nuclear scientists to help determine whether there are harmful mutations among humans as a result of environmental radioactivity. Hardy's crack at the Goldbach conjecture — that every number greater than or equal to 4 can be written as a sum of two primes (e.g.  $12 = 5 + 7$  or  $20 = 17 + 3$ ), using the circle method was only partly successful.

Diophantine equations — those whose solutions are required to be integers, e.g.  $ax + by = C$  and Riemann Zeta function are among other problems he tackled — with Littlewood and Ramanujan. Hardy's wide-ranging curiosity — reminiscent of Faraday<sup>6</sup> — his original turn of mind and his uncompromising insistence on rigorous thinking evoke admiration.

History — including mythological 'history' — has shown that it is not always that one finds the guru that one seeks ardently. Ekalavya was rejected by Drona while Karna was spurned by Parasurama. Abel was rejected by Gauss and of course, Ramanujan too was rebuffed by Baker and Hobson — who represent the 'system' — but he persevered ... and the results are well known.

It is amazing how the Hardy-Ramanujan collaboration clicked in the ideal sense of the term. Ramanujan was ten years younger than Hardy — but in intuition, intelligence and intellect he was perhaps an equal. Considering (for a moment), Ramanujan as a disciple (*sisya*) of Hardy, the latter was happy to see his *sisya* excel him — in the Upanishadic sense of *sisyadichet parajayam*. I am not sure if this is applicable to all mentor-protege duos. Mathematical thought and "some relentless force" drew Ramanujan and Hardy closer and closer during the First World War years.

Talking about such 'Connections' — one notes the Rabindranath Tagore-Edmond Gosse 'Gintanjali' connection which introduced the Bengali poet to the world and won for him the Nobel Prize. And the S.N. Bose-A. Einstein connection which immortalised Bose, whose birth centenary was celebrated on January 1, 1994.

Coming back to the war years 1914–1918, Ramanujan and Hardy did mathematics — like the chess players of Premchand — while the guns boomed outside. Even his letters to India talked mainly about the papers he had written, was writing or was about to write. Past, present and future belonged to mathematics. Not that he was not intrigued by the 'peculiar absence of letters from Janaki (his wife) but there was little he could do. We do see in such short phrases how the war — while being a blessing in disguise for his mathematical pursuit, was also a symbol of alienation between himself and his family.

Ramanujan, Tagore and Bose — geniuses with huge talents. But genius *per se* is not enough. The necessary and sufficient conditions for the blooming of the flower of talent are : sunlight in the form of a Godfather, proper time and proper place. Saffron doesn't grow in a desert. Mangoes don't come in winter.

There are two aspects to a genius like Ramanujan : The birth and the work. While the first was unpredictable the latter was *both* unpredictable and unfathomable. Unpredictability of events makes life interesting as their probabilistic nature makes modern physics so exciting. Words like destiny and fate could be used to describe the turn of events in Ramanujan's life. What about the 'hand of God' (Goddess Namagiri)? For Ramanujan, every formula he wrote down was the expression of a thought of God, while for Raman, there was so much more to learn about man that one shouldn't worry about God.<sup>7</sup> But the God of the scientist — in general — is either what inspires him in this work or else the asymptotic path to the nature of reality.<sup>8</sup>

The 'Hardy times' produced the best in Ramanujan. Among his contributions — which include the well-documented<sup>9</sup> Ramanujan function, Ramanujan hypothesis and Ramanujan sums — is the approximate formula for "pi" — the well-known fraction  $22/7$ , a fixture of mathematical culture<sup>10</sup> for more than two and a half millenniums. This fraction was first tackled by the Indian mathematician Brahmagupta who approximated it as 3.16 which was improved to the "useable" 3.1416 by Aryabhata. In the modern times — Wallis, Gregory and Machin gave a product, a series and a formula while Ramanujan gave a sequence which converges to the true value  $1/\pi$  much faster than all the earlier ones. The great virtue of this formula is that it has the basic ingredients of the *iterative algorithms* for  $\pi$  — modular equations in particular. Using the series the value of  $\pi$  has been calculated to a mind-boggling 17.5 million digits, using supercomputers.

While the intellectual fire could be stoked by discussions with Hardy and Littlewood, the physical warmth — so vital to the well-being of the strict vegetarian could hardly be provided by the English sun. Thus the English chill made Ramanujan sick — incurably sick. Added to this was the unhappiness over "my house (my wife) has not written to me".

There came a point of time in 1917 when Ramanujan was cut off from India, the English, and "by a chasm of personality, culture and circumstances" from Hardy as well. He was a genius — left to the storm — much like King Lear, to fend for himself — emotionally speaking.

The "simple heart" that Kanigel speaks of is evident in Hardy's words. "His natural simplicity and modesty has never been affected in the least by success". Indeed. By that time — towards the end of the Hardy phase — November 1918 — he was a Fellow of the Royal Society, with twenty major papers to his credit. P. Adinarayana Chetty — a close friend of Ramanujan narrates<sup>11</sup> : "During my short stay with him at Cambridge, many visitors would be surprised by his unassuming figure and the sparsely filled shelves. 'Are you the great mathematician?' they would ask. But after the visitor departed, Ramanujan would ask me : 'Can you suggest an appropriate reply to such a question and describe the dramatic pose to be assumed while giving that reply?' And we would have a hearty laugh".

His undiagnosed disease assumed serious proportions by December 1918. His mathematics, however, continued unabated. The famous taxi-number episode (1729 — the smallest number expressible as the sum of two cubes in *two* different ways :  $12^3 + 1^3$  and  $10^3 + 9^3$ ) testifies to the mental agility of the ailing Ramanujan. He returned to India in early 1919 — 'to a hero's welcome' and to 'die'.

After reading Kanigel's story, I think Ramanujan's life is best summarised in five words — Hard times and Hardy times'.

While many have waxed eloquent over Ramanujan's mathematical achievements and have posthumously recognized him, only a few like Kanigel and Littlewood have worked at his life *per se* — "the romance of his life and mathematical career".<sup>11</sup> The achievements of many a scientist often are so dazzling that his life pales into an insignificant background. 'Intellectually Ramanujan was not, and never could be 'just like everyone else'. But in social and public realm *he was* : he wanted recognition, needed it ... and got it'. Indeed the Russians have given him legendary recognition in their encyclopaedia that has recently appeared in English<sup>9</sup> "He was reserved in large groups, expansive in small ones".

Perhaps he knew his time to go had come. His horoscope had said he would live for thirty five. But he breathed his last on April 20, 1920 — one week before P.A. Chetty's article originally appeared.<sup>11</sup> But what is age — thirty two today? At that age most of us academics would be struggling to survive in the turbulent professional sea.

"It was always maths. Four days before he died he was scribbling". Youth was on his side although health was not.

Postage stamp — Institute for mathematical research — Ramanujan professorship of the Indian National Science Academy — these are the few significant ways his memory is cherished. But to continue the work on the lines he drew would possibly be the best way of remembering Ramanujan. The 'Lost' Notebook which was discussed by George Andrews—is probably not his last notebook.

"The secret of gifted productivity" says Klein, "will always be that of finding new questions and new points of view and without these mathematics would stagnate"<sup>12</sup>. Words that would automatically apply to Ramanujan.

Kanigel's story of Ramanujan could easily be recast into — say an eight-episode TV serial. The dialogues, the script, the interludes, the voice over, everything is there. There is triumph. There is tragedy. There is struggle. There is fulfilment. There is separation. There is frustration. There is sickness. There is cold neglect. And finally — premature death — in the prime of life. There were two women behind this supremely successful man. His doting mother and his self-denying wife. The latter *could* have been with him during the Hardy times. Raman was far more fortunate in this respect — with his wife going with him to Calcutta and to Stockholm. So that he was at home wherever he went.

Ramanujan was a 'Hardy boy' inasmuch as Faraday was Davy's protege. Ramanujan had at least entered college but Faraday wasn't even schooled. This however didn't matter for either. Both faced stiff opposition in their election to the Fellowship of the Royal Society — but were elected nevertheless. Both were simple and unassuming even as both were issueless. While Faraday regularly visited Sandemanian Church, Ramanujan visited Sarangapani Koil and Namagiri Koil, the God-

dess of Namakkal in whom he had unshakable faith.

Twenty second day of December 1993 was Ramanujan's 106th birth anniversary. 106 is not as prosaic as it seems.  $1 + 0 + 6$  gives 7 — a prime number. It (106) has only *one* factor, 2. It gives another prime 53 when divided by 2.  $5 + 3$  gives 8, the number denoting the number of directions and the number of petals in a lotus. These signify universality and a divine platform for creation. Who knows, the readers of the 21st century could get to know of yet another Ramanujan through yet another Kanigel!

#### References and Notes

1. Robert Kanigel. *The Man Who Knew Infinity — A Life of the Genius Ramanujan*. Calcutta, Rupa & Co. 1992.
2. Mathematics provided the turning point in my early scholastic and later (physics) professional career. If an accidental fall from a tree helped me concentrate on class IX mathematics and gain admission to a good school, my B.Sc. performance (in maths) fetched me a university rank and admission to IIT Madras with a merit scholarship. Thanks to my father's sagacity and destiny. It was at IIT that I met my esteemed well-wisher Dr. T.S. Sankara, a mathematics professor, whose brother was with the Ramanujan Institute.
3. Dilip M. Salvi. *Our Scientists*. New Delhi. Children's Book Trust, 1989.
4. Rajaji or C. Rajagopalachari — whom I had the good fortune of meeting at his house (through my father) in 1960 (when I was 11 years) and of listening to his protest speech during August 1968, when Russia invaded Czechoslovakia — was also born in December — 12th Dec. 1878, (in Tiruchi). This distinguished son of India, and a contemporary of Ramanujan helped the latter meet R. Ramachandra Rao, at a time when all seemed lost and Ramanujan was about to leave Madras in frustration. That was in 1910 — the hardest of hard times of Ramanujan.
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12. Quoted by L.J. Mordell, *Nature*, Vol. 148, p. 642 (1941).

# SRI PADMAVATHI MAHILA VISVAVIDYALAYAM

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# William Faulkner : The Man & The Artist

Hemant Gahlot\*

With the publication of "L'Après-Midi d'une faune" in the *New Republic* and "Landing in Luck" in *The Mississippian* in 1919, Faulkner blew the trumpet and entered the world of words with a firm and decisive step and continuously romped through the next forty two years. These years of incessant industry and great achievements are interspersed with the dark and gloomy period of looming into nothingness as well as stepping into the bright and purple moments of recognition and fame. Faulkner's literary graph is marked by many ups and downs. He made his appearance at a time when America was experiencing the post-war boom. One observes that the prevailing attitude of moral revolt, the bohemianism, the expatriation, the Jazz, the care-free experimentation in almost all the arts were the predominant features of the American life. Faulkner's participation in the First World War as a Cadet-Pilot in Royal Air Force in 1918 provided him enough ground material for his war stories. Apart from that the family lores about his great grandfather flared his imagination to the extent of making use of them in his works.

Faulkner, during the course of his career as a writer, started all alone and continued his strife with his own three tank theory—experience, observation and imagination.<sup>1</sup> His apprenticeship and evolution as an important man of letters, who would later influence generations of American writers, is to a large extent a result of his own 'fumbling in the darkness'. Martin Kreisworth, in unison with Northrope Frye<sup>2</sup>, relates this fumbling to Faulkner's reading which, though not voracious, was considerably consistent and great. He says, 'His (Faulkner's) education....consisted essentially of reading widely in speculative and imaginative works.' He also adds, "Every serious writer comes to literature from literature," and no sooner he picks up the pen, "He realizes that he must invent something perceived as "new"; he sees no less clearly that art, in essence, can never be new but is necessarily built on its own past"<sup>3</sup>. This, in no way, undermines the surrounding influences which finally produced the writer, who in turn produced

the myriad designs for which he is gratefully remembered by posterity.

Broadly the influences can be categorised as the following :

1) The land — which remained a great influence as well as a source of inspiration to the creative genius of Faulkner and ultimately made him proprietor of the Yoknapatawpha County with Jefferson as its County seat.

2) History — the use of which is chiefly made to furnish a foundation for his gradually developing romantic vision.

3) Slavery — the curse of fathers, that figures predominantly and pervades his concern to the extent of obsession.

4) Writers-contemporary as well as his predecessors, chiefly Cervantes, Shakespeare, Conrad, Melville, Chekhov, Balzac, Tolstoy as well as Gogol were amongst those that he recounted while answering a question during an interview at West Point.

5) Family background — the most dominant influence is his great-grandfather, Colonel William Cuthbert Faulkner, whose legends were told among Faulkner's family circle with great enthusiasm and pride.

6) Religion — the Old Testament and Church, the former gave him 'people and not ideas' while the latter was symbolic of the Southern social life. He turned to religion to create a background in his dealing with the moral patterns, of course, with a balanced and new perception.

7) War — both the First World War as well as the Civil War and its aftermath greatly shaped his ideas about the deadening impact of war on human beings.

Faulkner's early associations were his college time friends like Phil Stone and also his one time beloved and later, after her divorce from Franklin, his wife Estelle Oldham. Their relationship was intense, rippled with ups and downs, but as if it was God-ordained that Faulkner was finally able to get his sweetheart, now a mother of two children, in his arms. Amongst his friends Phil Stone remained a true and long-lasting friend. Even before Estelle

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entered Bill's life, Phil Stone used to fill the empty moments of Faulkner's literary, financial and even marital endeavours. Although he was four years senior to Faulkner, yet that never became any hindrance in their relationship. Their association, at least during Faulkner's apprenticeship, proved to be a significant foundation stone in the making of an artist. Blotner recalls their stay at Yale University, New Haven in 1918: "while he (Stone) went to class or studied, Faulkner read or wrote, going on walks sometimes through the campus, the city, and even out into the countryside beyond. He would go with Stone for meals....They would talk aesthetics and poetry. Both had fallen under the sway of William Butler Yeats, and sometimes in their room Stone would read him aloud....Faulkner's favourite line from Yeats came at the beginning of 'He Remembers Forgotten Beauty':

'When my arms wrap you round and press  
My heart upon the loveliness  
That has long faded from the world...'<sup>4</sup>

It is also worth noting here that this was the time when Faulkner was mentally preparing or rather waiting for the amendment in the 'draft' to lower down the age limit to eighteen so that he could enlist himself in army. Moreover, it was only after he had learnt that Estelle's marriage is fixed by her parents with Cornell Franklin, that he decided for a military career. Phil Stone always on forefront for his poet-friend Billy, cared for him as a family member would. He made Faulkner work, try new styles, new techniques; procured him a job which Faulkner joined rather unwillingly as a Postmaster; took up the responsibility of some of his early publications such as *Marble Faun*.

Faulkner's association with Sherwood Anderson, the fatherly-friendly-figure, has a great influence upon his later writings. In fact, it was Anderson, who first brought him to the literary scene of America by recommending his very first novel *Soldier's Pay* to Horace Liveright. Faulkner's encounter with Anderson at New Orleans was greatly beneficial — both as a friend as well as a mentor. To him Anderson was a 'giant' among the liliputians — the literary liliputs of his time. However, their relationship physically crippled with Faulkner's parodying of Anderson. As the latter was already preoccupied with Hemingway's caricature of him in his *Torrents of Spring*, Faulkner's provoked him to the extent that Anderson didn't see him for years. Their later meetings, very few in number, couldn't bring about

the reconciliation but still both showed a great deal of regard for each other. For Faulkner, Anderson always remained a "giant in an earth populated to a great — too great extent by pygmies."<sup>5</sup> Anderson too, even after that sad caricature episode, was always full of praise for Faulkner, who, for him, was a "Story teller, but he was something else too. The man is what they mean in the South when they use the word 'gentle'. He is always that. Life may be at times infinitely vulgar. Bill never is."<sup>6</sup>

One other lesser known impact was that of Thomas Beer about whom Faulkner himself said that he had influenced him a lot. Beer's short stories appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Harper's* and *Century*. Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County seems to have evolved out of Thomas Beer's narratives which were remarkable for the use of a "community and a connected set of characters which appeared in his fiction."<sup>7</sup> Faulkner's approach to the legend of Yoknapatawpha cycle with characters and setting appearing and reappearing was more or less patterned on the style of Thomas Beer.

Faulkner's visit to Europe, especially France and Italy, provided him materials which he later used in his short stories viz. *Mistral*, *Carcassonne* and *Divorce in Naples*. But the trip to Europe as a whole didn't influence him as such in the formulation of or improvement in his narrative technique or style which had already become visible in his early fiction.

The impact of history runs parallel in tune with the significant role played by the land and also the disruptive phenomenon of slavery. Before Faulkner, Hawthorne, Melville and Poe had already set the tradition of peeping into the past to find out possibilities of historical dimension in fiction. Above all, writers such as Fitzgerald, Hemingway and Faulkner were bequeathed a past full of sorry and turbid memories of the devastating Civil War interrupted by the brief relief of Reconstruction and followed by Depression. The past remained a "resonant and moving force upon the present, a force that liberated... from the curse of contemporaneity while it also made possible a degree of control over.. materials."<sup>8</sup> The lines addressed to Fitzgerald aptly explain the phenomenal use of the past made by his contemporaries including Faulkner. Unfortunately Faulkner's use of past is often cited as production of history which in itself is misleading. Prof. McCormic says that "Faulkner was not a Negrohating Southern regional Fascist, interested

mainly in violence, madness, and the more lurid crimes, but a writer whose vision was historically encompassing, compassionate and universal."<sup>9</sup> Faulkner's works are not mere history. Elsewhere in the same book McCormic testifies that history in Faulkner "is used to make a philosophical point or to construct a literary idea about the past, the present or both."<sup>10</sup> Cleanth Brooks makes an explicit distinction between history and fictional demands of history. He says: "Faulkner is writing fiction, not sociology or history, and he has employed all the devices for the heightening, special focus, and, in some instances, distortion, the fiction demands and justifies."<sup>11</sup> Thus historical patterns so predominant in Faulkner neither deter nor overshadow his literary output.

Closely related to history is the impact of land which remained the kernel of Faulkner's conscious concern as a writer. The land is the only bare witness to both — the history as well as the institution of slavery. The vicious violation of the primary code by instigating the institution of slavery, by destroying the wilderness, by relegating the Indians has necessitated that land itself must take its own retribution. Faulkner effectively attempts this by presenting the hollow and emotionally crippled men and women in contrast with the eroding and exploiting land. As Coughlan proclaims: "...the land itself, the living earth, is hero, God and protagonist in Faulkner's works as a whole."<sup>12</sup>

Faulkner's own family with its Old Colonel and Young Colonel gave great impetus and background to much of what he wrote all through his life. As pointed out earlier, Col. W.C. Faulkner, the great grandfather of William Faulkner was such a potent source of influence, inspiration and information that it surpasses almost all others in quantity as well as in quality. Colonel John Sartoris of *The Unvanquished* is unmistakably modeled on Faulkner's own great-grandfather. John Sartoris volunteered for the first regiment, built the Ripley rail-road and was killed in an encounter with his dire enemy Richmond J. Thurmond. Names, places and events are altered, coloured and modeled in the interest of fiction. William Faulkner was born eight years after the death of his great grandfather. He learnt about him through the stories told in his family circle, through books and rest through imagination. He thus modeled and magnified him, who, "had been enshrined long since as a household deity," and who was, "among the strongest influences of William Faulkner's life."<sup>13</sup>

Last but not the least, religious influences played a crucial role in the development of Faulkner's understanding of the problem of a decadent or otiose order — the curse of the vestigial code. As for the code, there is no separation of ethic from sanction. That the theology and behaviour run parallel. The time was ripe for a reinterpretation of Christian codes and moral attitudes. As the issues of conduct and decision baffled the masses, the old prescription offered no guidance in the new circumstances. As Amos N. Wilder rightly points out: "...Faulkner's work certainly illustrates the demand made upon Christians, that they re-examine their moralities at least once in a millennium, no doubt, sophistication in these matters may be in error as well as convention, but sophistication is essential."<sup>14</sup>

No one single factor is responsible for the making of an artist. Faulkner too, was the sum total of all that came his way from Colonel W.C. Faulkner to Phil Stone to Sherwood Anderson. He once said: "I think the artist is influenced by all in his environment."<sup>15</sup> All through his lone strife Faulkner wisely picked up the marble from among the pebbles, gave it his heart and soul to record the dilemma and passion of the human heart. Even his regionalism — his land and locale become universal in appeal when presented through his experience, observation and imagination.

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# William Faulkner as a Historian of the South

Bhupinder Jit Kaur Dhillon\*

William Faulkner (1897-1962) one of the outstanding novelists was born in the Southern States of America at New Albany, Mississippi and the majority of his novels are set in this region specifically in the area around Oxford, Mississippi where he spent most of his childhood. Since he draws his themes from a specific region, he is a regional novelist. In his books he recreates the history, the geography and the atmosphere of the place which he knew so well. What emerges from his books is not an accurate picture of the South but an impression of the area which penetrates deep into the psychology of its people both individually and collectively. Faulkner's works contain so much of the history of the South that he is known as the historian of the South.

Faulkner indeed is a Southern writer who in work after work has gone back to the same inexhaustible source — the American South, its disturbed present and its tormenting past. Critics have attempted in different ways to describe in what specific sense William Faulkner is a Southern writer. For example the famous American critic Alfred Kazin in his essay "The Stillness of Light in August" suggested that the secret of Southern writing is its 'intense sense of the earth'. By this phrase, Alfred Kazin means the ability of a Southern writer to register country sights and sounds. Since in novel after novel William Faulkner goes back to the same people and to the same region with its complex history of heroism, glory and shame the cumulative impression that the fiction of Faulkner leaves on the minds of his readers is that of a strong sense of place. To quote Malcolm Cowley: "He has a brooding love for the land where he was born and reared and where, unlike other writers of his generation, he has chosen to spend his life. It is ... this land, this south, for which God has done so much, with woods for game and streams for fish and deep rich soil for seed and lush springs to sprout it and long summers to mature it and serene falls to harvest it and short mild winters for men and animals."<sup>1</sup>

The novels of Faulkner constitute a single unified pattern and form a history of the imaginery

country of Yoknapatawpha. The area covered by Yoknapatawpha is 2400 square miles and the "seat" of this country is Jefferson. The people living in this region belong to various social levels. We have the one-rich aristocratic family descended from the first white settlers.

Faulkner's fictional universe is a tragic universe in which his protagonists are powerlessly enslaved by the tragic history of the land in which they are born; they find themselves hopelessly trapped in tragic situations and they die unable or unwilling to fight against what they regard as their destined end. In Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha country, the descendants of Southern aristocracy fail to save themselves and their beloved South from disaster because of their own inadequacies. Either they simply fail to accept the challenge and run away from evil as Gowan Steves does in *Sanctuary* or they are defeated by evil as Horace Benhow is in the same novel or they are cheated by the upstart poor whites such as Snopeses or they retire into illusions of Southern virtue and heroism as is true in the case of Mrs. Compson of *The Sound and the Fury* and of Reverend Hightowe in Ligo in *Light in August* or they indulge in self-destructive actions as Bayard Sartoris does. In different ways, a majority of the characters of Faulkner are doomed. These characters rush towards their inevitable doom.

Faulkner loves his South and at the same time fears for its safety. He reveals a tragic awareness of the fact that the South is slowly being destroyed by the stupidity of its natives or by the greed of the outsiders. In this connection Malcolm Cowley observes: "Here are the two sides of Faulkner's feeling for the South; on the one side, an admiring and possessive love; on the other, a compulsive fear lest his love should be destroyed by the ignorance of its native serfs and the greed of traders and absentee landlords."<sup>2</sup>

By the time Faulkner was born, his family, an old established one like many others in the Southern states was declining socially and economically. The civil war in which the Northern States of America had fought the Southern States in part to free the slaves of the South, had a profound effect on the social structure of the area bringing changes which

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\*Urban Estate-1, Patiala-147 002.

were unwelcome to those who had liked the distinctive character that might be briefly described as hierarchical in nature consisting of the slaves at the bottom of the social scale and the plantation owners at the top. Although Faulkner was not in favour of slavery but he shows in his books that the sudden intrusion of men from the Northern states and the abrupt destruction of this Southern hierarchy was not a wholly desirable thing. The Civil War brought a sudden and unnatural end to Southern hierarchy and the people of the South were not prepared for it. In Faulkner's works too they never succeeded in finding a new identity. They spend their lives in the passive contemplation of the pre-war past while their world continues to decay around them. C. Vann Woodward writes : "The experience of evil and the experience of tragedy are parts of the Southern heritage that are as difficult to reconcile with the American legend of innocence and social felicity as the experience of poverty and defeat are to reconcile with the legends of abundance and success."<sup>3</sup>

*Absalom, Absalom!* the greatest of Faulkner's novels is probably the least understood of all his books. The difficulty in understanding this novel springs not from the story of Sutpen which is the basis of the book but from the way in which that story is told. The story emerges from the midst of a complex chorus of voices which often go over the same parts of the story but which each possesses a unique tone. These various tones reflect the personalities of the characters handling the narrative. The lack of chronological order and the variety of tones or versions of the basis story create a complexity whose sole justification is Faulkner's desire to use the basis story as a means to an end and that end may be broadly described as a desire to recreate his vision of the South and its people with the stress falling heavily on the inner world of the characters' minds. These minds are shaped by the present state of the South and by the personality of the individual. So the basis story of Sutpen is a key which unlocks the door to the interior worlds of a number of characters and because those interior worlds owe much of their shape to the South, both past and present, the story opens the door also to the South itself or at least to Faulkner's vision of the South.

In *Absalom, Absalom!* Sutpen who wants to be a Southern gentleman conceives his grand design when he is turned from the door of a rich white man by a well dressed Negro. According to General Compson from that moment onwards, Sutpen is

determined to be as good as the rich white man. This naturally involves keeping his dynasty free from Negro blood. Quentin and Shreve know that his first wife must have turned out to be a part Negro and so in Sutpen's own words 'unsuitable'. They come to realise that Bon was the child of this marriage and that Sutpen would not have objected to Judith's becoming Bon's wife on the grounds of incest. He forbids it because Bon from his mother has inherited Negro blood which will spoil the purity of Sutpen's grand design.

Thus, Sutpen destroyed his first attempt to establish a dynasty because he found out his wife was part Negro; he destroyed his second attempt by alienating Henry and forbidding Judith's marriage and by the time he makes his third attempt with Wash Jones' grand daughter it is too late for he is old and impoverished. Almost at the end of the novel Shreve says :

So it takes two niggers to get rid of one Sutpen, don't it? which is alright, it's fine, it clears the whole ledger ... except for one thing ... you've got one nigger left. One nigger Sutpen left, of course you can't catch him and you don't always see him and you never will be able to use him. But you've got him there still ... I think that in time the Jim Binds are going to conquer the western hemisphere ... and so in a few thousand years I who regard you will also have sprung from the lions of African kings.<sup>4</sup>

As a Canadian Shreve is probably mocking the Southern attitude to colour in this speech. It is true that Sutpen was destroyed by his obsession with the negro blood and the clash between black and white appears to have been at the root of much of the suffering and trouble. It is also true that the half-caste Bond is the only survivor of the Sutpen line yet the whole matter is so over-stated by Shreve that suspicions of mockery are justified. However Faulkner does show that the white Southerner's distrust of the Negro and his desire to ignore the changed status of race are part of the general flight from reality. In Sutpen Faulkner gave us a character who was willing to live with and father children with Negroes yet he clung to the black white discrimination and that defeated him in the end.

In Faulkner's fiction the characters have in common an obsession with the past, with the glorious pre-war South and in a sense the story of Sutpen is an allegory for the story of the South as

they see it. Sutpen and Southern gentility came from 'nowhere'. They took land from the Indians, dragged civilization into the midst of the wilderness and tried to set up dynasties which would withstand the passage of time. Like Sutpen, the people of the South had a curious attitude towards the Negroes. The matter of colour is an important issue in the book. This appears in this book in various ways as the civil war was fought in part to defend a culture based on differences between Negroes and white people; changes in the status of Negroes are seen by the whites as reminders or symptoms of the defeat.

In the mind of Rosa Coldfield, there is a connection between the fate of the South and that of Sutpen. Sutpen and South both emerged out of the civil war abysmally poor with their own subjective notions of vindication, strangely enough through defeat. Rosa Coldfield concedes that Sutpen was a man of valour who never surrendered his sword to the enemy. She believes that the South lost the war because it had to depend on the valour of men without honour, men like Sutpen. Rosa Coldfield believed that "But that our cause, our very life, should have been thrown into the balance with men like that to buttress it — men with valour and strength but without pity or honour."<sup>5</sup> Rosa has no doubt in her mind that this was the reason why 'Heaven saw fit to let us lose'. Rosa Coldfield sees the hand of God in the destruction of Sutpen family and the near extinction of the Coldfield family — She often uses the words such as 'fatality' and 'curse'. The same curse and fate affect the South and Sutpen himself because "some ancestor of ours had decided to establish his descent in a land primed for fatality and already cursed with it, even if it had not rather been our family, our father's progenitors, who had incurred the curse long years before and had been coerced by Heaven into establishing itself in the land and the time already cursed."<sup>6</sup>

Here we have a sense of the Southern history as the slow working out of a fatality and curse on the South and on some representative families so that in a literal sense, the sins of the fathers are visited on the heads of their children. Quentin Compson is convinced that the South lost the war because it had to depend on such monsters as Sutpen to fight for its cause. Here Faulkner interlinks the history of the sins, the crimes, the shames and the defeat of the South with those of Sutpens or the Compsons — families which are doomed to die out.

The title of the book, with its Biblical allusion, supports the hypotheses of Shreve Quentin. Sutpen would not say 'My Son' to Bon as David said to Absalom even after Absalom's rebellion. And different as he was from his father, Henry acted in the end on the same racist principle, killing Bon finally to prevent not incest but miscegenation. One meaning of Absalom, then is that when the old South was faced with a choice it could not avoid, it chose to destroy itself rather than admit brotherhood across social lines.

Faulkner in *Absalom, Absalom!* and other novels set in Yoknapatawpha stresses the function of the oral tradition, the mouth to mouth tales. The whole of *Absalom, Absalom!* is an intensive exercise in oral history. General Compson passes the Sutpen story to his son who passes it on to Quentin; Miss Rosa Coldfield is determined that the story shall not die, also passes it on to Quentin and so when he goes to Harvard, Quentin takes the story with him for this, with all the other stories of death and glory, is his inheritance. That inheritance is not simply the Sutpen story analogy for the story of the whole South but also the state of mind which cannot break the fixation with the past and so cannot enter into life.

Mr Compson emphasises the role of oral tradition and his view gives us some indication of the nature of Faulkner's vision of the South: "We have a few old mouth-to-mouth tales: we exhume from old trunks and boxes and drawers letters without reluctance or signature in which men and women who once lived and breathed are now merely initials. We see dimly people, the people in whose living blood and seed we ourselves lay dormant and waiting, in this attenuation of time possessing now heroic proportions."<sup>7</sup>

The conversation between Shreve and Quentin also gives us Faulkner's vision of the South. Shreve says: "We don't live among defeated grandfathers and freed slaves ... and bullets in the dining room table and such, to be always reminding us to never forget ... a kind of entailed birth right Father and Son and Father and Son of never forgiving General Sherman."<sup>8</sup>

In Shreve's definition of the difference between his own Canadian background and Quentin's Southern one, there is an implied comment on

Sutpen's story that Quentin would have been incapable of making. But this does not mean that Shreve is right and Quentin wrong, but that Shreve has clarifying point of view. Quentin tells Shreve "You can't understand it, you would have to be born there", it is Shreve who at the end offers the prediction that the 'Jim Bond are going to conquer the Western hemisphere'. He asks Quentin why he hates the South. To this, Compson replies: 'I don't hate it ... I don't hate it, he said, I don't hate it. I don't. I don't!'"

This compulsive and repeated denial emphasises the important truth that Quentin hates the south, if not wholly, at least partly.

Faulkner suggests the backward looking-vision into the past. Reality is what is past and not what present is. Time does not move in a chronological order. The past, present and future are fused and confused in such a way that the reader is made aware that people who dwell in the past, present and future are indistinguishable and past has all the qualities normally associated with present. Faulkner does show that many of his characters do live their lives only through the past and past has more relevance and life to the individual than the present. Quentin and Rosa are the prime examples of this. The time as measured by objective standards, clocks, watches and calendars is seen to be irrelevant in real terms, what counts is memory and subjective reaction, for these are the things which give experience, its force and validity.

Thus, the novel is about Sutpen and about the South. Sutpen's story is analogous to the story of the South in many many ways. In the first place, we must recognise that Faulkner saw the South as being doomed just as Sutpen's hopes were doomed. Sutpen's dynasty ends with the lament of a deranged half-caste and all that he strove to create is turned to ashes, his land appropriated by a state which has no feeling for the land. Similarly, the South both in this book and in many other novels by Faulkner is fated to be taken over by those with no feeling for its traditions or history. Those traditions themselves have turned into ashes which bury not only the dead but the living for whom they are the sole inheritance and the Southern dynasties grind to a halt among the impotent or the deranged. For example, the Compson family with Quentin dead ends with the idiot Benji and the impotent Janson.

Thus, we see that Faulkner is a great historian of the South. In *Absalom, Absalom!* and in many other novels, he has presented the problems of the South particularly the white man's problems. But as an artist he does not always, offer clearcut solutions to the white man's problems. In his novels *Intruder in the Dust*, *Requiem For a Nun*, *The Sound and the Fury* and in *Absalom, Absalom!* there are certain passages which are generally regarded as representing Faulkner's views on the problems of the South. What Faulkner suggests is that past is never dead. One cannot escape one's past or one's history. The way to salvation for the white man is that of acceptance of his past, recognition of his guilt and it is only through humility and self-criticism that the white man can change the world outside and tame the wilderness within. Thus, we realise that in almost all his novels he has written about his South because it was the one subject that he knew and exploited its inexhaustible fictional possibilities. In this sense he is a great historian of the South.

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# A Look at Arthur Koestler's The Roots of Coincidence

A.L. Deshpande\*

Arthur Koestler's essay entitled *The Roots of Coincidence* seeks to explore the relationship between mysticism and logic in a new way. In this fascinating study he has tried to demonstrate in a convincing manner how the latest theories in modern physics come very close to the latest theories regarding the *modus operandi* of the baffling parapsychological phenomena like telepathy, clairvoyance, pre-cognition, psychokinesis, etc. Through this study, more than through any other book of his and there are some of his books like the *Art of Creation*, and *The Case of Midwife Toad*, where his attempt has been the same — Koestler has sought to explore the integrative tendency of modern thinking.

In *The Roots of Coincidence*, one gets the conviction that human life is extremely mysterious and that there is more to it than meets the eye. Telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, PK are some of the most fascinating and tantalising phenomena which baffle the human intellect, particularly the intellect that has been trained in the western traditions of logic and reason. Koestler informs us that during the last few decades, however, parapsychology has been accorded the status of an academic discipline. He is confident that the future prospects of this discipline are indeed promising. It is pregnant with immense possibilities. The marriage of parapsychology with physics promises wonderful offspring in the form of new insights into the nature of reality.

## Debatable

There is little doubt that this essay which seems to explore the frontiers of modern science will be received differently by scientists committed to the old school of thinking and those who have kept their minds open on the issues discussed in it. However, there is no denying the fact that the book will spread confusion among the anti-ESP lobby of modern scientists.

That Koestler has painstakingly collected the latest data on space, time, matter, causality, neurophysiology and psychical research will be obvious

to anybody who cares to go through the bibliography to this book and that he has presented a lucid exposition of it will be obvious to anybody who reads it from cover to cover, though it might present difficulties to those uninitiated into the jargon of modern science. The real significance of the book lies, however, in the fact that he has achieved a remarkable synthesis out of these diverse data. His concept of Janus-faced Holons might prove an extremely useful tool to our generation in unearthing the mystery of existence.

That the topic of this essay is immensely exciting is beyond doubt. Writing this essay was for Koestler a tightrope walk on the line of intersection of excitement and extreme caution. Although Koestler's concern to keep his excitement under control is understandable (because otherwise he would have lost his grip on the scientific community) there is no doubt this cautious treading has robbed the essay of its thrill. And Koestler, the creative artist that he is, seems aware of this fact because when he requested Renee Haynes to write a postscript to this book, his ostensible purpose was to restore the balance in favour of excitement. He is aware that his treatment has given a certain one-sidedness to his subject.

However, the lost thrill has been largely compensated by his beautiful language and wit. The following quotation from the book will bear ample testimony :

"We have heard a whole chorus of Nobel Laureates in physics informing us that matter is dead, causality is dead, determinism is dead. If that is so, let us give them a decent burial, with a requiem of electronic music. It is time for us to draw the lessons from twentieth century post-mechanistic science and get out of the strait-jacket which nineteenth century materialism imposed on our philosophical outlook. Paradoxically had that outlook kept abreast with modern science itself, instead of lagging a century behind it, we would have been liberated from that strait-jacket long ago."

## Clear Position

In the course of the book, Koestler has un-

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equivocally made his position clear. He has told us that like many of us he has been a reluctant convert. "ESP is a pain in the neck. I would be happier without it; but it is there". It is no use denying the existence of parapsychological phenomena, although it is true that it eludes understanding. It refuses to fit into the concepts and categories of thought bequeathed to us by the ancient Greeks and enriched by 18th century materialistic philosophy. It requires a new concept regarding the nature of reality. We have to postulate a world operating within the opposite poles of causality and a-causality. There is a class of phenomena which belongs to the realm of a-causality and here the concepts and categories of the causal world fail to be effective.

Although such a postulation might appear to be preposterous to our common sense it is no less preposterous than some of the concepts on which the edifice of modern nuclear physics has been built because sub-atomic physics as well as galactic physics both refuse to fit into the rational scheme of Newtonian Physics.

It is perhaps because of this that many eminent

physicists have, after they have crossed the age of fifty been attracted towards parapsychology. To mention only one such example, Wolfgang Pauli's essay on the relationship between mysticism and physics and his collaboration with Jung while preparing a treatise on *Synchronicity : An A-Causal Connecting Principle*.

However, ESP and allied phenomena are unpredictable and unrepeatable. And it is because of these peculiarities that many serious people are not attracted towards an investigation of these phenomena. ESP is a highly individual experience and does not allow quantification. But that should not lead us to doubt its existence because in that event we shall be compelled to doubt the existence of love and hope.

By using all the tricks of the trade, Koestler has built up a convincing case for parapsychology and I will not be surprised if this essay were to inspire a few scientists to apply their energies to the illumination of this obscure region of human understanding.

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# Psychobiographical Studies and Mahatma's Life

D. Gnanasambandan\*

Dramatists, novelists, historians, biographers and perhaps the psychiatrists are mainly concerned with the description and interpretation of individual lives. Life histories, actual as well as imaginary are not only inspiring and instructive but also useful as guides and incentives to others. They help us to understand how people in different periods and societies lived — what they thought, what they said and did, how they felt about their experience, how they saw their worlds, how they were perceived by others and the processes by which they interacted with their race and milieu. Further, the life histories have been used as adjuncts or supplements for learning about socialization processes, culture and personality, history of the family and society, personality development, psychopathology and so on which may generally fall within the domain of social sciences and behavioural sciences.

The interpretation and description of an individual's life — his thought and action — requires a commonsense understanding of his mind. A probe into mind — a psychological endeavour — is implicitly present in every biography and history. Psychological assumptions and conceptualizations are inevitably embedded in them though most of them cannot be equated with systematic psychology.

As a result of the wonderful discovery of our century — psychoanalysis, biographical studies which utilize psychoanalytic theory and practice in interpreting the lives of historical and public figures have become increasingly prominent. The application of psychoanalytic concepts to biography which has made a significant advance over the commonsense psychology, traditionally used in biography, offers not only fascinating reading but also new insights into our way of looking at ourselves — 'what man has made of man'.

The history of psychobiography, though brief, is full of activities. With the publication of Freud's *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his childhood* (1910)

began the psychobiographical enterprise bringing forth a number of books on reinterpreting the life histories of eminent men of the world. Prominent among them are the analyses of Shakespeare, Socrates and Martin Luther. Even writers with no formal training in psychoanalysis or psychiatry contributed to the cause of rewriting the life histories for discovering thoughts and actions hitherto unnoticed. Of course not all of them were without sound theoretical base. The best known among the works of 1930's are L.C. Clark's *Lincoln: A psychobiography* (1921) which studied the unconscious motives underlying the great statesman and Krutch's *Edgar Allan Poe* (1926) which demonstrated how best the writings of a writer could be used for analysing the unconscious motives.

The production of psychobiographical writings which continued through the 1930's also invited considerable attack on the methods adopted in the study. By the end of the decade the psychobiographical output was so extensive and varied that nobody worth the name 'great' was left out. It has been reported that while Sigmund Freud was studying the behaviour of Moses and Leonardo da Vinci, he himself was under investigation by another psychohistorian.

Writers like Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Moliere, Goethe, Coleridge, public figures like Caesar, Lincoln, Napoleon and scientists like Darwin, Newton and Alexander Bell are a few among many other eminent men about whom psychobiographical works had appeared by then.

In contrast to the 1930s which were a relatively slow period of production, the 1940s and the subsequent decades witnessed an exhaustive and a wide range of production. The improvement was not only in terms of the number of works but in terms of more rigorous and methodological perfection. A sample of such works includes George and George's *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House: A personality Study* (1956), Erikson's *Youngman Luther: A study in psychoanalysis and History* (1958) and Langer's *The Mind of Adolf Hitler* (1972). Prominent examples of recent works are studies of Henry James, Gandhi, Max Weber, Stalin and Richard

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Nixon — to cite only a few among many other names of artists, writers, musicians, politicians, religious leaders, scientists and film stars.

This brief survey will indicate the extent to which the psychoanalytic application has become prominent in the study of life histories.

It seems that the formulation of psychoanalytic theories is arrived at in two ways. Either the analyst looks at his own self as the subject or at other selves for interpretation. It has been pointed out that the theories of Freud, Jung, Otto Rank and Wilhelm Reich were based in important ways on the interpretation of themselves, which were put forward as more general theories of human personality. Ebbinghaus had steadily put himself to experiment in order to develop his theories of memory.

The other way is the study of others as revealed in their life histories. This method consists of constructing and reconstructing psychological, social and scientific interpretation of particular individuals. The testing of the chosen individuals should have validity and reliability. Any Tom and Dick will not yield usefully to the testing whereas great men of social, political and literary importance will do. The availability of evidence due to their eminence and the interest centred around them due to their achievement in one field or another are probably reasons for focus on them.

Not all great men can come within the grip of psychoanalysis. There are men who had lived many lives as it seems from the alternate accounts of their lives. In the absence of reliable evidence, their life presents itself in many coloured domes. Different writers will have different perspectives or analyses on the same life. Further, in the light of varying changes in theoretical perspective, the biographers have constantly to revise and reconstruct their understanding of particular events or particular aspects of the chosen personality.

The problem of diversity of biographical accounts is indeed an unsurmountable problem. For instance, the life of Jesus from an historical perspective and the life of Shakespeare as gathered from the records, letters and his plays present as diverse an account as what is called "infinite variety".

It is interesting to note that alternative accounts of some great men are available not so much due to the shortage of information but mostly due to the enormous bulk of available data. The life of Lincoln is a classic example in this regard. In addition to masses of primary sources, a large number of books

have been written on each and every facet of his life as his paternity, childhood, education and so on leading to his assassination.

"Lincoln's life has been a quarry" says an author "mined for a multitude of purposes with different authors pursuing a variety of themes and issues. .... Different biographers draw upon, and were limited by, their own experience in understanding Lincoln".<sup>1</sup>

Among all these great men, while many evading straight forward scrutiny for psychoanalysis, the life of Mahatma Gandhi seems to be an outstanding exception. Perhaps no other great man has made his life such an open book as Gandhi has done. True to its name, his life account is truthful to the core.

In fact Gandhi was well aware of the implication of his autobiographical narrative and he remarked :

"If some busybody were to cross examine me on the chapters already written, he could probably shed much more light on them and if it were a hostile critic's cross examination, he might even flatter himself for having shown up (make the world laugh by revealing) the hollowness of my pretensions..... I am not writing the autobiography to please critics. Writing it is itself one of the experiments with truth".<sup>2</sup>

Thinking aloud about his desires and inclinations which men would generally try to hide is an unusual quality in Gandhi. During his life time, he shared his passing thoughts and even embarrassing dreams with the readers of his letters and his weekly journals making himself an easy target for malicious critics.

Erik H. Erikson, the renowned psychoanalyst finds Gandhi's *Autobiography* as a 'case study' and notices Sigmund Freud to be the other man in our time who offered to the reading world such candid descriptions of small events in his life for the sake of developing his theory and a technique of truthfulness.

It is interesting to note that what Jawaharlal Nehru found to be the achievement of Gandhi was that of a psychoanalyst. What Gandhi had accomplished for India was "a psychological change, almost as if some expert in psychoanalytic methods had probed deep into the patient's past, found out the origins of his complexes, exposed them to his view and thus rid him of that burden".<sup>3</sup>



The central theme of Erikson's book *Gandhi's Truth* is the event — the Ahmedabad Textile Workers' Strike of 1918. In Gandhi's biographies and even in his autobiography, the strike of 1918 is described as somewhat of a mistake and a failure. But to Erikson this strike has a certain dramatic and psychoanalytic interest. The strike and the fast represent a demonstrable crisis in the middle age of Gandhi. He describes this time as 'in between period' of Gandhi's life : the South African Gandhi had already become historical and had earned himself the renown due to a Mahatma while the history of Gandhi, the Mahatma had not yet begun.

Focussing his analysis on this phase of his life, Erikson has made an exemplary analysis of Gandhi's personality and his observations on Gandhi's childhood, sexuality, married life, identity-crisis and what he calls 'ambivalence' are illustrative of the phenomenon called Mahatma.

Erikson, himself a Freudian whose focus would be on childhood and sexuality has given great attention to the young Gandhi's life. Reducing a leader of Gandhi's stature to earlier childhood traumata is necessitated as Gandhi himself has devoted a major part of life account to his early life. 'Experiments with Sin' that is how his autobiography pictures him as a child and a youth, totally obsessed with matters of guilt and purity and a failure in the ways of the world. Erikson feels that it would be impossible to understand the Mahatma's stature and influence without knowing that he was once Moniya (child Gandhi) and then Mohandas (Young Gandhi) which contained potentials that had gone into the making of Mahatma.

According to Freud, "... initially there are no traits but only potentialities which develop with the individual's attempt to adapt himself to the situations he meets throughout life".<sup>4</sup>

The potential elements of Mahatma are to be seen, according to Erikson, in the early episodes of his childhood and youth. For instance, in the famous incident (often described by biographers to illustrate young Gandhi's straightforwardness) in which Mohandas refused to listen to his teacher's advice to copy the neighbours paper in a test, has for Erikson a trend which has its own developmental logic, a logic Gandhi's life has in common with the lives of other saints. Similarly the atmosphere in which Gandhi grew up — the atmosphere of joint family — constitutes the style of living created by Gandhi in his ashram, the style of the head of the joint family. It also made him feel at a very early age that his was the fate of an elect being.

Erikson establishes that young Gandhi had the defensive wish to be untainted and unsmudged and this obsessive part of Gandhi remained lastingly. He was painfully conscious of a special mission. A man like Gandhi knew that he had to contain and conserve a superior energy which he later called 'Truth Force'.

The traditional, characteristically Indian concept of 'brahmacharya' is found to be a very difficult concept to the Western psychanalysts. Unable to grasp the idea that the sublimation of sexual desire is a *sine qua non* for spiritual state, Freudians refer to it as perversion tracing its roots in home and nascent influences. What figures prominently in the lives of saints in India is what we find in the life of Mahatma.

Erikson, though extols Gandhi as a saint, finds Gandhi's attitude to sex as something peculiar, a personal phenomenon. His sexuality is seen as having been marred by, what to him was "juvenile excess" and charged with feelings of guilt.

"Clinically speaking, one can only conclude that Gandhi had to save his kind of playfulness, intimacy and creativity from a sexuality which had offended him in the biblical sense and that he was fortunate in his capacity to derive eventually a sense of gaiety from plucking it out. But we shall see that some vindictiveness, especially toward woman as the temptress, survived in him and made him insist on absolute chastity as a necessary condition for leaders in non violence".<sup>5</sup>

While making such wild allegations, Erikson discusses in a defensive way that Gandhi had life long developed a "motherly" trait which made him nurse the cause of women and the destitutes. In fact it is Erikson who goes into the details concerning charges levelled against Gandhi's proximity with young women during Naokhali tour in 1948 and places Gandhi's character in proper perspective. He doubts whether there has been any other political leader who prided himself on being 'half man and half woman ..., more motherly than woman born to the job'.

Erikson observes that some of the interpretations with regard to the "feminine" service which Gandhi had unconsciously in mind would have unhesitatingly been acknowledged by Gandhi as his conscious intention.

"Gandhi, one may conclude, from all the parental themes we have recounted, had wanted to purify relationship to his father by nursing and mothering him; and he had wanted to be an

immaculate mother. But when, at the end, he was defeated in his aspiration to be the founding father of a united India, he may well have needed maternal solace himself".<sup>6</sup>

Gandhi has been called a cruel husband and an exacting father. His family had to fit in with the stern code which he had devised himself as a politician. "What he could not resolve in his private life", Erikson commenting on Gandhi's role as a father and a husband says, "he turned into the father of his nation" and "extended his paternal feelings to mankind".<sup>7</sup> This explanation of Gandhi's severity towards his family may seem superficial in this post-Freudian age, though it will easily make sense to those acquainted with the cultural milieu in which Gandhi had grown up.

Though Erikson's psychobiographical account of Gandhi's emotional overtones and inner conflicts is merciless, he cannot withhold his admiration for the end product of the whole processes of the making of Mahatma. The whole enterprise has been laudatory and psychology has at its best, proved so useful that many less known aspects of Mahatma have been brought to light.

Erikson, no doubt has paved the way for others to analyse on psychological basis the life histories. His influence in this regard is nonetheless remarkable. For instance, Judith E. Walsh while comment-

ing on the life history of Surendranath observes that "elements of Erikson's pathography are present in Banerjea's (Surendranath or S.N. Banerjea) autobiographical account of his life".<sup>8</sup> Runyan considers the concept of identity as enunciated by Erikson to be the greatest contribution in the realm of psychobiography.

Psychoanalysis has come to stay in the realm of life histories. Who would be willing to do without it and return to the alternative of relying on lay beliefs alone as the foundation for interpretative work in biography?

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# A Soul's Safari

G.B.K. Hooja \*

Netta Pfeifer, the author of *A Soul's Safari* (Radha Soami Satsang, Beas, (Punjab), 1981. pp. 213; Rs. 16/-) has a typical Christian background including 14 years of Catholic education. To this day, remembrance of those years conjures up in her mind images of nuns, priests, prayers, rosaries, the Pope, holy pictures, holy water, incense, Gregorian music, school uniforms, obedience, confession, fasting, silence. However, in all these rites and rituals, solemn, awe-inspiring or beautiful as they were, she could not make any sense, until, as she says, her third eye was opened, after her encounter with the Master in 1968.

Netta Pfeifer had been deeply touched by the story of a pet lioness, Elsa, who was successfully returned to the wild by her owner, Joy Adamson. She felt that, like Elsa, she too had been born free; then Fate had saddled her with heavy responsibilities. Reading this story, she knew she was poised for release back into some "free" life.

So she corresponded with Joy Adamson who had written the story in a series of 3 books, *Born Free*, *Living Free* and *Forever Free*. Eventually, she found herself taking up Joy's secretariat chores in her Kenyan retreat.

Joy was born in Austrian Silesia and raised in Vienna. She took lessons in arts history and life drawing. In 1944, she met George in Kenya's Northern Frontier District and they married.

George was born on an indigo plantation in Dholpur (Rajasthan), where his father was an engineer, who had planned the Dholpur Railway. When George was about 10, his father migrated to Kenya. In 1932, George became a Warden in the newly formed Games Department.

In 1956, the lion cub Elsa came into their lives. Stationed at that time in Isiolo, Joy and George reared their lioness, born free in the East African wilderness, as a pet. When the cub outgrew her environment, instead of shipping Elsa to a zoo, they chose to return her to her natural habitat. To that

end, they launched the long and arduous process of teaching her how to kill and how to defend herself to be able to survive in the wilderness. In 1960, Elsa mated with a wild lion, producing 3 cubs. A year later, she died. By then she and her human mentors had rivetted universal attention on Africa and the plight of the world's wild life.

Netta's appointment with Joy ran into 6 adventure-packed, thrilling and exciting months in Kenya's Meru National Park, with Joy's *cheetahs*, George and his lions, other wild animals, who roamed the plains and vandalized their isolated camp, torrential downpours and a flood that inundated their palm-log huts and the silence, the soul-searing silence that is the sound of Africa.

"Yoga", the Sanskrit word for "union" mentioned casually by her to Joy, linked her to the Adamsons' friends, two veterinarians in Nairobi, who were members of the Radha Soami teachings of India.

To India's Punjab and the Radha Soami headquarters at Dera Baba Jaimal Singh, Beas, then, the author journeyed for a rendezvous with Maharaj Charan Singh, the then living Master of the science and philosophy of *Sant Mat*, the path of the Saints.

There she was initiated by the Master into the Yoga of Audible Life Stream or Sound current, that primal force known through the ages as Purusha, Logos, Word, the practice of which takes the soul back to its original form, God. Thus from the trip of a life-time, the author's travels turned into an unparalleled experience, the trip of an eternity of life-times, her Soul's Safari, as she says.

What is *Sant Mat* or the Path of the Saints?

The first postulate of *Sant Mat* is, you shall reap as you sow. If you sow a crop of chillies, you shall reap chillies and not sugarcane. Right. So watch your actions.

Its second postulate is, all humans are the children of God, the Supreme Force, which governs the Universe. Says Kabir :

“अव्वल अल्लाह नूर उपाया, कुदरत के सब बन्दे,  
एक नूर ते सब जग उपज्या, कौन भले कौन मन्दे”

First, there was God. He gave Light. All are the

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creatures of Nature. The entire Universe is born from the same Light. Then who is good and who is bad?

Divisions between man and man on the basis of colour of skin, sex, sects, races, communities are unGodly in so far as they tend to generate social tensions and disharmony. These are, therefore, to be discarded. Humans should be distinguished on the criterion of their actions and on no other basis. Says Bulleh Shah :

“अमला उल्ले होन निबेड़े, खड़ियाँ रहनगिया जाता”

Actions should determine the worth of a man and not caste.

The third postulate is : God is within us. Again Bulleh Shah :

“वेद कुरान पढ़ पढ़ थके,  
सिजदे कर दिया घिस गए मत्थे।  
ना रब तीरथ ना रब मक्के,  
जिन पाया तिन दिल विच यार।”

Of no avail exhausting studies of the Vedas or the Koran or unending prostrations. The beloved is neither at the Tirath nor at Mecca. He is right within us. Kabir puts it cynically thus :

“कंकड़ पत्थर जोड़ कर मसजिद लई चुनाय,  
तां चढ़ मुल्ला बाग दे, बहरा भया खुदाय।”

Having built the mosque stone by stone, The priest ascends to give the call from there. Is God deaf?

The next postulate is that Mind determines behaviour and conduct. So the strengthening and control of the mind is the required thing to do. And therefore the axiom : Know Thyself.

The *Sant Mat* prescribes a number of simple mental and physical exercises, which tend to discipline the mind. The First is *Simran*, repetition of the Name.

You choose your own Name for the Divine Force, of which you are a part and repeat it as often as you can.

Next is meditation. This will help your mind merge into IT and thus gain strength. This is what the concept of Daily Death denotes. This is what St. Paul means when he says : I die daily.

Two questions arise, what do you meditate upon and how? Of course, you meditate on the Divine Light which illumines your Inner self and

burns bright in you, for are you not part of the Divine Force? This is best done by concentrating on the *tisra til*, which is situated between the eyes, slightly above the bridge of the nose. Some have referred to it as the third eye (of Lord Siva) which is symbolically said to have consigned to ashes the *Kaam Deva* (Lord of Passion). Christ called it the Single eye. As Maharaj Charan Singh points out, this is what Christ meant when he said, “Knock and Ye shall find”. The Maharaj explains: “We always knock from the outside. The door of the house is always opened from the inside. The Lord is inside; we are outside. When we bring our consciousness to this eye center, the door opens, the third eye opens. Saints explain that here at the eye center is the Audible Life stream. Every saint has given a different name to that silent music. Christ referred to it as the Word, the Logos”. As Swamiji says :

“नाम के रंग में रंग जा,  
मिले तोहे धाम निज अपना।”

Besmeat thyself with the colour of the Name. Thou shall find thy abode.

Another aid towards this end is *satsang* (association of the noble). It is truly said, a man is known by the company he keeps. And lucky is one who finds the company of the *Sadguru*, the true teacher. The world is full of charlatans, who would feign, mislead the credible to keep themselves in business. The seeker has to beware of such traders in religion and to seek the genuine Guide. That is why Guru Arjan said :

“मेरा गुरु परमेश्वर सुखदाई  
पार ब्रह्म का नाम दूदाये  
जन्त होई सुखदाई।

My guide is God Almighty, the source of all Happiness. The Name of the Supreme Lord strengthens me. And the end is blissful.

In the words of Kabir, a devoted disciple surrenders his all to the Guru. But a True Guru seeks nothing from the disciple :

“सिख तो ऐसा चाहिए गुरु को सरबस देय  
गुरु तो ऐसा चाहिए, सिख का कछु न लेय।”

The next aid is “*sewa*” (service), particularly of the down-trodden, the sick and the needy. Thus daily practice of *sewa* chastens the egoistic tendencies and sans a sense of pride, it uplifts the practitioner and enhances his well-being. It is, therefore, enjoined that the disciple shall curb his sense of



arrogance and cultivate modesty, for Ego stands in the way of self-realization — God-realization — as nothing else.

This is exactly what Christ meant when he gave the parable of the needle.

In the words of Maharaj Charan Singh :

"Every saint who has come from that destination has the same message (of love) to give. No saint comes into this world to divide humans, to set one nation against another, one religion against another. The nearer we are to the Lord, the nearer we are to each other. We cannot find peace from material achievements. The more we run after them, the more frustrated we become everyday. If we search the Lord within ourselves, the nearer we are to Him and we will find peace within ourselves. Once you get peace within yourself, you radiate peace. If you are miserable, you spread misery all around you."

As the author moved in the quiet rhythm of the active life at the *Dera* — meditation, *satsang*, *sewa*, *satsang* — she drew "tranquility from the peaceful procession of simple tasks" performed from day to day, and found herself transformed. Slowly, she began to understand the Master's point about detachment and attachment.

Initiated by a living Master, who was guiding her to the reality of survival, she began to discover what it meant to be born free, to live in love and love by release. Since her *Sadguru* had taught her how to meditate, she became less impetuous, impulsive and rash, less anxious and afraid, and grew far quieter and calmer of mind. She underwent a metamorphosis.

The test came when her mother died. Let the author speak :

"As far back as I can remember, she (my mother) battled an unpredictable mental and emotional illness that made life in a fairly small eastern town at times almost unbearable for all of us. Over the years, I convinced myself that I was the pillar of stability and strength that she could not be, and gradually, even though I never wanted to do it, I usurped the role. Therefore, I had to try to control her life as well as my

own ... With the help of my Guru and my meditation, I peeled off our mother/daughter labels and underneath the masks we had worn for so long, I found an understanding, a real sharing and a great love that had never been allowed to flow. She died in 1975. I still remember the bright, sunny morning when my sister, Karol, my brother-in-law and I stepped off a pavement in St. Monica into the world of the funeral parlor's tiny chapel, where a single subdued light shone on a grey casket, sweetly adorned with pink rosebuds and carnations and where soothing music was only subliminally audible in the back-ground. The room was so still, so overwhelmingly still ... I concentrated on my *Simran*. Finally, I looked at my sister. Something seemed to draw us together and I put my arm around Karol. Then the tears flowed, gushing down both our faces. Staring at the grey box, we just stood there crying. "Release her. Let her go," I said finally ... Again and again, I repeated the unpremediated command that just seemed to pour out of me. "Release her. Let her go. Release her. Let her go." ... My sister and I were being sent a message from Infinity, one last embrace of love and gratitude and we knew it... Together, my sister and I had participated in the release of a soul into the river of life, and we had been freed."

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# The Zoo Story : A Plea for Otherism

Mustufa Khan\*

One thousand nine hundred and ninety four is the year of the Family. In declaring it to be so the United Nations is of course guided by the universal concern for reaffirming the filial values that have helped man to flourish through ages. It aims to create a weltanschauung. That is : a scheme or concept of human history, especially one by which a particular individual or group seeks to understand or explain things as they are, and possibly or probably may be, in order to be guided in forming a policy or programme. That is what we can at the most call the official version. Literature cannot be circumscribed like that definition. Nor can it be expected to toe the official line.

The relationship between the book and the family is very old indeed. In the West birth and marriage were entered into the blank pages enclosing the family bible. A chronicling of pedigree cannot find a better place than to be near the Genesis and be associated with the primordial family. Literature has done enough through its words to refurbish the family and its hypostases : love and compassion for each one of the family, tender care to help and protect each other, sacrifice of one's comfort for the others in their hour of trial.

Ensconcing oneself within the fortified phalanx of the family members and not bothering for others or caring for them is the very opposite of what human family ought to be. Even Huck Finn's father would not have liked such callous outlook howsoever his dislike for civilization and refinement. A humane concern for the others is the essence of family life. For, is not human society itself a larger family? But when the homo sapiens degenerate, we have the mafia family as in *The Godfather*.

Edward Albee's play *The Zoo Story* is a contrastive study of the benign and the callous concepts of family. The exclusivist family man Peter is set against the inclusivist Jerry who is in search of a family. The only family that Jerry knows is in the frame containing the photo of his mother. Outside the frame the family does not exist. Hence the search for the family. Peter's is the fugitive sense of family. He shows no pity for the Other. He is devoid of Otherism or the hypostases of the family.

Edward Albee's use of language is quite evidently realistic. His characters speak a language that closely approximates the spoken idiom of their contemporary America. The locale of the dramatic action is also persistently realistic unlike many of the dramatists with whom he is linked. This realistic use of language based on the action in the play and the locale which is distinctly not metaphysical make Albee an American dramatist. He has a dimension of absurdity of the continental playwrights but he retains his Americanism. The European playwrights, like Samuel Beckett and Ionesco, use a highly figurative language. It is often metaphysical. Albee is selectively figurative and mostly literal and limited. This is borne out by the American slangs and idioms complemented by the persistent emphasis on the locale. Nowhere in the play is the language recondite. It is the plain language interspersed with some highly formal words and expressions. A primary thematic concern of the dramatist is with the failure of communication and hence the focus on the plain speech. The failure in communication is the catastrophic consequence of the treatment of the Other. The characters are aware of a sense of the Other but have no concern for the Other. The tone and tenor of the words constitute a plea for treating the Other with love and understanding, which, in other words, is the Otherism of Albee.

The play opens as Jerry comes to the bench where Peter is sitting in the eastern part of the Central Park in New York. Jerry walks from the zoo which is around the Sixty fifth street to the bench nearer the Seventy fourth street. Peter confirms that Jerry has been walking northerly. They can see the Fifth Avenue from the bench. Peter has come from his house on the Seventy fourth street between Lexington and Third Avenue. The Upper East Side is the place where middle class live. But Jerry comes from a relatively poorer section, Upper West Side. He lives in a rooming house between the Columbus Avenue and Central Park West. He could have come to the zoo or the bench by a nearer route but he has walked up Fifth Avenue from the Greenwich Village beginning his march from Washington Square. He has walked three miles to reach the zoo. From his rooming house to the Central Park bench he would have to walk a much shorter distance of

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just one mile if he had wanted it.

The real longer distance is contrasted with the imaginary shorter distance he could have taken. This points out the hiatus between the rooming house in Upper West Side and Peter's apartment in Upper East Side.

Peter : It doesn't sound like a very nice place...where you live.

Jerry : Well, not; it isn't an apartment in the East Seventies.

Jerry gives the impression of being an irresolute and even a bohemian coming up from Greenwich Village, trying to establish a contact with the resolute and settled Peter. The contact appears from the first an impossible situation, something that cannot be endured. Jerry had to take the subway from the rooming house to go to Washington Square. A Westsider would surely view such a journey as impossible, unendurable. But that is what Jerry has intended to do : *to go out of the way to meet someone like Peter who has one wife, two daughters, two cats, two parakeets and two television sets, a lucrative executive job in publishing line. A man, in other words, who has thrown a protective sheath around himself against anyone like Jerry who is a permanent transient and a homosexual. And yet Jerry had to make this impossible journey to the zoo to learn the bitter truth about relationship of man and man and man and animal. They live in their isolated cells unconcerned with each other. "It's necessary to go a long distance out of the way in order to come back a short distance correctly."*

This coming back a shorter distance correctly is equivalent to the imaginary journey of shorter distance between the rooming house in Upper West Side and the zoo and Peter. Given the complexities of modern life of alienation it is impossible to make the journey. It is clear that Jerry would never go straight to the east side and break the barrier and open up channels of communication, of empathy and fellow feeling. All this is impossible because it is quite unendurable. After all Jerry goes so much out of the way, he even gives his life for making a contact and the result is that Peter *does* take his book and *does* hurry away leaving the miserable to die such an agonising death. Jerry knows that this is all futile. The long and real journey that Jerry makes is a pointer of *the futility of the short and imaginary journey which he does not undertake.*

What design does Jerry have in undertaking the longer route when it produces the same result as the crossing of the shorter distance would have done?

His walking up the Fifth Avenue is as momentous as his visit to the zoo. It takes him through the isolated human beings to the isolated caged animals. His earlier attempt to befriend his landlady's dog ends up in futility as does his encounter in the zoo and his fruitless effort at making a contact with Peter. Significantly, Jerry mentions that he met the dog after he recovered from poisoning when he had come from a movie that he had seen on the Forty second street. If he did plan his end to be what it turned out to be then he must have come to the conclusion by the realization of the stark reality and irreconcilability of the two, Peter and he himself and the self incarceration of the individuals. Individual and social pressures work on the characters.

The language of the play is replete with the grim denial of the Other. Jerry's mother was a northern stiff. His room on the fourth floor is partitioned with the beavered board. The other half is occupied by a coloured queen, a male homosexual who never has any contact with him. the beavered-bifurcating board is akin to the bars separating the cages in the zoo. The Other is partitioned off. In the beginning of their encounter Peter considers Jerry as a hold up man when the latter asks him about his income. This thought of Jerry as a mere holdup man amounts to a denial of the Other. Jerry has deliberately chosen the east side of the Central Park to meet someone like Peter. The refusal to acknowledge Jerry as a human being deserving compassion is the hallmark of Peter which is physically paralleled by the policemen chasing the fairies or homosexuals off from the western part of the Central Park. "That's all they do. That's their function." And Peter does what is his function — denying the Other. Calling Jerry a bum he wants him to get away.

The Other has a legitimate right on us as a fellow being. The claim of the Other is for our fellow feeling. Is the walk from Washington Square to the zoo in the Central Park not a march to demand this legitimate right of a man to be treated as a fellow being ? Is this not reminiscent of the civil rights march of Martin Luther King? The long march of three miles would not be necessary if the shorter march from the west of the Central Park to the East Seventies were viable. The apparently futile walks — the imaginary and the real — become highly meaningful as well as fruitful if people realise the Other, and know even the "slightest, what other people need?" The realistic language and the persistent emphasis on the locale make a plea for love and understanding. Live by kindness and not by cruelty is the message. Live with Others and let Others live with you. To live as a human family and not in cages.

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# Toni Morrison : The Nobel Laureate

K. Sumana\*

It is extremely gratifying to note that the 1993 Nobel Prize for Literature has gone to Ms. Toni Morrison, a black American woman writer, whose work has rightly been described as 'amazingly high'. She astutely describes aspects of the blacks' lives and especially of blacks as the people they are. There are many writers willing to describe the ugliness of the world as ugly, but the uniqueness of Toni Morrison lies in revealing the beauty and the hope beneath the surface of the black America. Like Golding's, her books have a fabulistic quality, and she has been directly inspired by Afro-American folktales.

Born in Lorain, Ohio, in 1931, into a working class society, Toni Morrison was the second of four children of George Wofford, a shipyard welder and his wife, Ramah Willis Wofford. After attending Lorain High School, she went to Howard University, where she majored in English and minored in classics. After earning an M.A. at Cornell in 1955, she taught for two years at Texas Southern University, and then in 1957 took a teaching position at Howard, where she married Harold Morrison, a Jamaican architect. In 1964 she divorced Morrison and returned with her two sons to Lorain. By 1970 she had moved to an editorial position at Random House in New York. She continues to be an Editor of *The New York Times*.

All her early life Toni Morrison absorbed the black lore, music, language, myths and rituals that give her prose its special flavour and tone. "We were intimate with the supernatural", she recalls. Her parents told her thrillingly terrifying ghost stories. Her mother sang constantly like Shaw's. Her grandmother kept a dream book and played the numbers off it. Thus, Morrison's world, like the world of her novels, was filled with signs, visitations and ways of knowing that reached beyond the five senses.

Toni Morrison made her debut as a novelist in 1970 with *The Bluest Eye*, and soon gained attention

for her epic power, poetic imagery, fabulistic quality, unerring ear for dialogue and richly expressive depictions of black America. She glories in writing 'peasant literature' for her people. She declares: "I write what I have recently begun to call village literature, fiction that is really for the village, for the tribe".

As a novelist, Morrison seems to combine the aims of the Black Freedom Movement and women's liberation. Like many other black women novelists of the contemporary period, she analyses the relationship between class, race and gender. She has exquisitely illuminated in her five novels — *The Bluest Eye* (1970), *Sula* (1974), *The Song of Solomon* (1977), *Tar Baby* (1981), *Beloved* (1987) — the definition of woman in relation to race and class assumptions. Her latest novel is *Jazz* (1992).

*The Bluest Eye* is about a black girl's desire for the bluest eyes, the symbol, for her, of what it means to be beautiful and, therefore, worthy in our society. At the centre of the novel is Pecola Breedlove who comes from a poor family that is virtually cut off from the normal life of a community. The novel succinctly expresses the vulnerability of poor black girls and how easily they can become the pariahs which the structure of society must have. At core, it is about the contradiction fostered by racism, sexism and class distinctions that assail the black girls.

In *Sula* Morrison captures most profoundly the way concepts of good and evil are related to societal definitions of woman. Concerned with black life in Lorain, it contains much of the precise language and striking metaphor of *The Bluest Eye*. It is known for its dense poetry and for the depth of its probing into a small circle of lives. It focuses on two black women — Sula and Nel, who are totally contrasted with each other. Whereas Nel becomes a slave to racism and sexism, Sula becomes a 'liberated' woman with a strange mixture of cynicism and innocence. But, the freedom that Sula achieves is as much a prison as it is liberation. Totally free, she becomes obsessed with herself, unable to love and uncontained by the normal rules and boundaries we have come to associate with human beings.

*The Song of Solomon* is not, however, cast in the

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basically realistic mode of most family novels. It does not primarily focus on the concept of woman, for its protagonists are men. Yet, class, in relation to race, becomes even more focal in this novel than in Morrison's first two. For, though Milkman's quest for his identity is the dominant thread of the novel, the focus is on his mother, Ruth, and his aunt, Pilate who are brilliantly contrasted with each other. As Ruth is a society lady, so Pilate is totally outside society as symbolised by her house outside the town which is not even wired for electricity. The distinction that Morrison makes between class and community and between autonomy and self-absorption is represented by the towering figure of Pilate who is totally beyond class distinctions and yet is the embodiment of the spirit of her community. In making Ruth and Pilate come together, Morrison seems to suggest that the effect of class distinctions and the fragmentation of community may be overcome by women in their over-riding concern for the living.

*Tar Baby* is a black novel, a novel deeply perceptive of the black's desire to create a mythology of his own to replace the stereotypes and myths the white man has constructed for him. It is also a novel about a woman's anger at her need for an impossible man. In this regard it is a woman's novel too. Toni Morrison's accomplishment is that she has raised her novel above the social realism in which many black novels are trapped. She has succeeded in writing about race and women symbolically. She consistently creates a world of characters each of whom represents a specific social value. In the love story of Jadine and Son, she develops her most compelling relationship between a man and a woman. Morrison seems to suggest that class concerns are now more critical than racial bonds and that women, in their search for autonomy may be taking on patriarchal values.

Morrison's widely acclaimed fifth novel, *Beloved*, is a complex fable about slavery and liberation of the slaves a century ago. The novel explores the hardships endured by a former slave woman and her family during the Reconstruction era through flashbacks to past tragedies and deeply symbolic delineations of continued emotional and psychological suffering. Eliciting a variety of thematic interpretations, *Beloved* has been variously categorised as a Gothic romance, a ghost story, a holocaust novel and a feminist doctrine. Critics have extolled Morrison's exquisite views of historical detail, startling imagery and African-American

colloquialisms in portraying the emotional aftermath of slavery in America. Like Dickens, Morrison creates wild, flamboyant, abstractly symbolic characters who are, at the same time, not grotesques but sweetly alive, full of deep feeling. *Beloved* remains a work of mature imagination — 'a magisterial and deeply moving meditation not only on the cruelties of a single institution, but on family, history and love'. Instead of reconfirming our feelings about tragedies in our nation's past, the novel shakes up all our preconceptions, makes us grapple with the 'moral chiaroscuro' that shades each of the character's decisions. It does not merely give us a portrait of one individual's loss of innocence, but also reveals the myriad ways in which families and strangers can hurt and redeem one another.

Toni Morrison's latest novel, *Jazz*, represents an advance in her work. She improvises stories within stories, goes back to quote the past, interweaves a multitude of different voices and points of view. It has an easy sweep and a heart-beat quality to its prose. And, as it spends itself, it carves deep swathes of pure pathos.

*Jazz* is a love story, a kind of black romance. Morrison's writing of a black romance pays its debt to blues music, the rhythms and the melancholy pleasures of which she has so magically transformed into a novel. On top of that, she has claimed new sources and new kinds of reading as the inspiration for a thriving literature.

Morrison has addressed all her novels to the need for black people to see themselves within a culture. The very title of the novel, *Jazz*, reiterates the black-folk nature of Morrison's inspiration. As we go through the novel, we are with youth versus old age, sterility versus sex and the swamps versus the gaudy hubub of city.

*Jazz* tells the pathetic story of Violet and Joe Trace who were married over twenty years. The narrative glides between the present and the past, to the rural Virginia of the 1880s where Joe and Violet met and from which they eventually migrated to the magical place they call the city. As the story unfolds, we come to understand what happened.

Joe and Violet, the husband and wife, get up at night, in their musty apartment in Harlem, to study the photograph of the dead girl, Dorcas, who Joe has shot dead, and respond with mutterings of love,

jealousy and bile. Violet wreaks her vengeance on the dead girl by slashing her laid-out-for-the-funeral corpse with a knife. Violet, the wronged wife, is a many-faceted creature and, like Herman Hesse's Steppenwolf admits to many selves within herself, occasionally "stumbling into a psychotic limbo". Morrison makes no secret of her anger at the injustices dealt to black women who were mothers, serving women and corpse dressers — women who found an angry church and an angry God, and for whom pregnancy was worse than death.

Morrison gives us a multi-faceted view of Joe and Violet and the rest by the seemingly simple device of letting different voices tell the story or related episodes of the same story. The vision of Morrison's nameless narrator frames the love story, and this anonymous voice slowly draws readers into the rhythm of the city, specially Harlem, where Jazz casts bewitching spells on people's psyches. Morrison has demonstrated again in *Jazz* why she is unequivocally one of the finest contemporary writers in America.

Toni Morrison's originality and power emerge in characters like Pecola, Sula, Pilate, Jadine, Sethe and Violet that we have seldom seen before and that

do not fit the familiar black images. Like George Eliot, she has a rare gift for characterization. She can compel her readers to learn about themselves by experiencing, through her characters, states of mind which they would ordinarily disavow.

Toni Morrison's extraordinary distinction as a novelist also lies in restoring the language that black people spoke to its original power. Her language is always simple and potent. It is both tight and loose, colloquial and elevated, not over-luscious with flowery phrases. This spare quality of the writing blends softly with the languid and familiar tone of the dialogue. The rhythm of black speech in Morrison's control is complex and versatile, and with it she makes third person narrative sound as intimate as a back porch conversation, and confidences in the first person sound like a dream.

To conclude, Toni Morrison tells tales of the suffering and richness, the eloquence and tragedies of the black American experience. She is, however, careful not to make all the whites awful and all the blacks wonderful. Like Alice Walker, she wants to tend the imagination, search for an expansion of the possible and, what is more, nurture a spiritual richness in the black tradition, even after three hundred years, in the 'white desert'.

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# India's Development Planning

## An Overview

Mohan Panse\*

"Development Economics" was largely theoretical when India started her five year planning exercise in 1951. Today, it is no more a theoretical science, but an empirical science based on applied experiments and case studies. The book *Development Planning — The Indian Experience* by Sukhamoy Chakravarty, Oxford University Press, 1993 is a critical overview of India's development planning over the last three and half decades. The former member of Planning Commission explains the analytical considerations which went into the formation of India's post-Independence development strategy, initially articulated by Nehru and Mahalanobis, and the modifications which were subsequently introduced in the light of experience. The author also deals extensively with the problem of plan implementation by tracing the weak links in it. Current issues of economic policy have also been discussed.

The scholarly work by Chakravarty assumes special significance at a time when our country is passing through a crucial transitional period of implementation of new economic reforms programme. At a time, when our country is attempting economic liberalisation, the world is undergoing profound economic and political changes, under dark clouds of recession. The emerging new economic world order calls for drastic overhaul of economic policies by the developing countries. The developing countries are, in turn, increasingly concerned about how to re-start their engines of growth to face the tough challenges of the 21st Century.

India's post-Independence development planning has come under severe criticism than ever before—both at home and abroad. Under the strong imperatives for change as they have emerged now, it is quite pertinent to ask the fundamental question: What will be the job of planning in India in future?

Planning has been one of the pillars of our poli-

cies since Independence, and our present strengths derive from its achievements. However, there is increasing recognition that in many areas of activity, development can best be ensured by freeing them of unnecessary controls and regulations and withdrawing State intervention. Centralised economies are opening up to free market and international competition.

In India, too, Chakravarty acknowledges that over the years the scope for strategic action by private actors has widened, partly because the size of relevant industrial or production units has increased, and partly because the distinction between political behaviour and administrative direction has been considerably eroded (Page 41). According to him, changes taking place in the world economy have also helped to make the problem of production planning a more difficult task, especially because the degree of openness of the economy has increased in recent years. He, however, cautions that this does not imply by any means the abandonment of planning, but redirection of its scope. A return to *laissez-faire* will be self-destructive, especially in a country like India, where one of the major pressures on the continued viability of the system is emerging from the rapid growth of population, a process which is only remotely related to market processes, he asserts.

While market-led growth patterns have proved themselves efficient in some cases, this has generally been at the cost of equity. Chakravarty, therefore, suggests that India may well need to get rid of some features of its complex regulatory framework and give greater scope to market signals, but it will need to take countervailing measures on redistributive policies (Page 88). The large size of our country tends to increase both the possibilities and the problems of development planning. On the one hand, it presents the possibility of deriving advantages of scale that a large market entails, but on the other hand the very fact that regions are unevenly endowed with relevant economic resources makes the planning process complex and implementation faulty, thus resulting in differential growth instead of regional equity. Chakravarty maintains that the

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problem of unbalanced regional development cannot be taken care of by leaving decision making to the market forces alone. A market system will specially give rise to growth poles instead. Very likely, these powerful market units will gravitate towards growth poles, tending to reinforce the agglomerative forces with further adverse effects on equity.

Though the deficiencies of the market mechanism in promoting 'balanced regional growth' were recognised from the mid-fifties onwards, the successive plans could not truly succeed in avoiding the dangers of polarized growth. We are witnessing pressure for greater regional autonomy even when from the strictly market point of view India is far more integrated than before. Chakravarty calls for strengthening the planning process in a strategic sense, and by strengthening the synergy of the institutional motive forces represented by the 'state' & the 'market'; and by devising practical instruments and policies which can maintain a proper balance between 'advancing' and 'lagging' regions (Page 51). Therefore, the relationship between the centre and the states assumes far more crucial dimension in the future planning process. Though more adequate funding may well be needed, merely a large devolution of funds from the centre to the states will in itself not provide the necessary stimulus for speedier development of the lagging regions. What is, therefore, essential is to augment the planning and execution capability of decision makers at lower levels of the hierarchy.

The author has strongly advocated the case for democratic decentralisation of planning and implementation. He further maintains that strengthening the productive base of backward states requires a major attempt at raising their agricultural productivity per hectare. It also requires generation of adequate off-farm employment in small scale enterprises in rural areas. In addition, there is the obvious need to develop a whole range of activities which will create human capital as well as have a significant effect on restraining population growth. Chakravarty calls for maintaining a non-inflationary macro-economic environment by the centre, broadening the tax base, more efficient use of existing capital and labour resources and adequate outlays on health and education besides ensuring equal access on the part of deprived sections of the community. A more systematic integration of regional planning and sectoral planning will strengthen the process of attainment of long held goal of 'growth with equity'.

## Weak Links in the Indian Planning & Implementation

It has been widely held among critics of India's development planning exercise that Indian plans may be fairly good on paper but are rarely good in implementation. The author has given serious consideration to this criticism. He believes that though the plans may be both feasible & consistent, they are unlikely to work in practice because there is a very large number of actors involved whose decisions cannot be influenced in the desired direction by what the planners propose. Also, the plans did not work because the desired coordination of activities among the different actors was faulty, either because 'messages' were faulty, or because they were transmitted with delay, or went contrary to the specific interests of the actors involved and therefore evaded. Thus, an implementation failure may be said to arise if one or more of the following conditions hold :

1. Planning authorities are plainly inefficient in gathering the relevant information within the needed range of precision.
2. Planning authorities respond with considerable time lags when the underlying situation changes.
3. Agencies through which the planning authorities are supposed to implement plans have little or no capacity (or in some cases, motivation) to carry the act. There are two important sub-cases (a) publicly owned agencies, which operate largely according to 'non-price' signals (such as government 'orders'), and (b) private agencies, whose behaviour is basically inclined towards profit maximization.

## The Eighth Plan — A New Paradigm of Development

The critical review of India's development planning in the past by Chakravarty in the present book and many of his important suggestions for the future have been endorsed by the plan panel while preparing the 8th Plan (1992-97). The process of economic reforms and structural adjustments has to be carried forward without sacrificing the imperatives of development, which calls for delicate balancing of options in the formulation of the plan. Though there is a gradual shift from centrally planned economy to market economy, it is not a choice between the market mechanism and planning; the challenge is to effectively dovetail the two

so that they are complementary to each other. A poor, developing country like India cannot have the ambivalent attitude of the developed market economies.

The Eighth Plan is complementary to the new economic reforms programme. It envisages a re-definition of the role of Planning Commission in the changed milieu. The shift is gradually towards 'Indicative Planning'. Through the instrument of indicative planning, it is expected to obtain a clear picture of the effects on the entire economy of any change in governmental policy. The Planning Commission will play an integrative role for higher productivity of investment in critical areas of development. In addition to the resource allocation role, the Planning Commission will concern itself with resource mobilisation for development as well as with efficient utilisation of the funds. Further, the Eighth Plan envisages greater role for peoples' participation in the development process. For the first time a new direction is being given to achieve the Plan objectives by the adoption of institutional approach. Democratic, decentralised planning and implementation would be strengthened during the plan period. Also, there is an element of 'flexibility'

incorporated in the Plan with greater scope for change, innovation and adjustment, thus strengthening the weak links of previous plan implementation.

### Concluding Remarks

The Eighth Plan marks a cross-road in India's Development Planning. It is a plan to salvage the process of planning to reorient it to meet the needs of a vastly changed national and international scenario. Sustaining the pace of economic reforms is a major challenge during the plan period.

Issues that bear upon India's development prospects are inevitably very complex. Moreover, they cannot be solved merely by economists and bureaucrats. While they can obviously suggest more efficient means for pre assigned goals, the problem of goal setting is inherently a socio-political process. Societies which have grown fast during the recent period have done so not only because the sum total of problem solving effort has been greater, but also because they could succeed in evolving a broad consensus on priorities. We, too, need a much greater degree of social and political consensus on what is to be attempted.



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# On Corporate Culture Building

T. Thomas\*

The authors undertook this study *Corporate Success and Transformational Leadership* by P. Singh and Asha Bhandarker (Wiley Eastern, 1990. Pp. 357. Rs. 240) because —

a) Leadership studies have been mostly limited to lower and middle management levels, and

b) Studies which focus on Chief Executive's role in organisation building and its success have been extremely rare in the Indian context.

The authors have focused on top management leadership and specifically, the impact of "transformational" leadership on corporate "success". A transformational leader is one who plays a crucial role in bringing about transformation, reorientation, and success in the entire organisation.

The book is divided into five chapters namely (1) Corporate success and transformational leadership — Rationale and Framework of the study, (2) Corporate transformation — Indian Experiences, (3) Transformational leaders — A study of their profile, (4) Corporate Transformation — Modes and Processes, and (5) Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.

Chapter 2 which constitutes the bulk of the book, contains the process of transformation in five enterprises — two public enterprises at the corporate level (Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation Ltd and National Fertilizer Ltd), one divisional level of a public sector (the Pench division of the Western Coalfields in Madhya Pradesh), One unit level change (IFFCO) at Phulpur in Uttar Pradesh and one major change in a giant private sector (TISCO). Each case study discusses in detail the process of "Corporate Culture Building". The studies have analysed in depth the profiles of the leaders associated with the transformation process, with the special reference to strategies and actions taken.

The transformational leaders are :

(i) S.V.S. Raghvan (Chairman and Managing Director of MMTC between 1982-83 and 1986-87).

(ii) S.N. Jain (Managing Director of NFL between 1986-88).

(iii) P.K. Sinha (Chief General Manager of the Pench division of WCL between 1984-85 and 1986-87).

(iv) S.P. Sharma (General Manager at IFFCO, Phulpur between 1983-84 and 1986-87).

(v) Russi Modi (In TISCO as Director, Operations, from 1969, as Managing Director from 1975 and as Chairman from 1985 to 1987-88).

The common feature of these leaders is that they conformed to the Reddin's managerial styles of "developer", "benevolent autocrat", and "democrat". They emphasised the value profiles of humanistics — power, achievement, entrepreneurial and group orientation and democratic — participation. The main finding has been that the transformational leaders mostly adopt the person-centered approach. They are also great visionaries in boundary management with high strategic adaptability.

The book resorts to the use of many Indian terminologies — "Goonda", "Karta", "Kutumb" to name only a few. There is an exhausting number of tables and references, the latter being 268.

The authors have taken much pains in the area of collection of pertinent literature and its analysis. However there has been too much dependence on questionnaires. A little more discussion on the theory and models of transformational leadership would have made this book reach the threshold of excellence.

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# The Indian English Poet Who Made History

Bijay Kumar Das\*

Historically Indian English poetry made its first appearance with the publication of Henry Derozio's *Poems* in 1830. Indian English poetry written in the nineteenth century and first half of the present century was derivative in nature. Only three poets — Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Sri Aurobindo who stand out among the rest wrote some lyrical verse in ornate language. Toru Dutt and Sarojini Naidu wrote poetry in romantic vein following the British romantic poets. Sri Aurobindo wrote poetry in a dead language to suit his soul—stuff. Hence, the identity and authenticity of Indian English were suspect till our Independence.

The poet, who gave an identity to Indian English poetry and brought it on par with poetry written in English elsewhere in the world is Nissim Ezekiel, a Jew of Bene-Israel origin. His position is analogous to that of T.S. Eliot vis-a-vis Modern English poetry. Ezekiel not only wrote poetry in English, but taught and encouraged others including Dom Moraes and Jayanta Mahapatra to write poetry in English. It is his perception, sensitivity and commitment to environment that lend authenticity to his poetry. It is largely due to his effort, influence and encouragement that Indian English poetry has achieved international recognition. To use the Shakespearean epithet, I should say that Ezekiel gave Modern English Poetry 'a local habitation and a name'.

Nissim Ezekiel (1924- ) was born into a Bene-Israel Jew family in Bombay, whose ancestors came to India from Israel thousand years ago and made India their homeland. His father was a Professor and mother a teacher who founded and became the head of a Marathi language primary school. English and Marathi are spoken in his house. Ezekiel attended a Catholic school in Bombay and then he was educated at Wilson College, there. For some time he joined M.N. Roy's Radical Democratic Movement and was actively engaged in trade unionism. He was financially helped by his friend

Ibrahim Alkazi to go to England for higher studies. He had a trying time in London for three years and a half when he supported himself through such meagerly earning jobs as clerk and dish-washer. Poetry, poverty and philosophy were his companions in London. He studied philosophy and wrote poetry. It is here that he published his first book of verse, *A Time to Change* in 1952. On his return journey he worked as a sailor scrubbing decks and carrying coal on an English cargo ship bound for Indo-China to earn his passage money. On return from abroad he joined *The Illustrated Weekly of India* for two years, then worked for an advertising company for five years, another year as a factory manager, and thereafter as a journalist and broadcaster before joining Mithibhai College in 1961. In 1972 he joined Bombay University as a Reader in American Literature and later became a Professor of English till his retirement in 1985. He won the Sahitya Akademi Award for his book of verse *Latter Day Psalms* in 1983 and Padma Shri was conferred on him by the Government of India in 1988. He is now actively associated with the Indian PEN.

Ezekiel's poetry began by echoing Yeats, Eliot and Auden. Right from the beginning city (i.e. Bombay) has become an integral part of his poetics. The desire to come to terms with life and reality by overcoming alienation became the central motif in his poetry. The introductory quotation from the *Book of Revelation* given in his first book of verse, *A Time to Change* is reminiscent of Eliot's method of using epigraphs as introductions to some of his poems. Ezekiel's use of language from the beginning is influenced by Eliot's use of poetic diction. Like Eliot, Ezekiel uses antithesis and paradox as a device to make a poetic diction of living Indian English idiom. From the beginning he seems to make an effort to bring the everyday colloquial Indian English language to poetry. The title poem of *A Time to Change* has Biblical allusions. There are Old Testament echoes reminiscent of the *Book of Psalms*. The moral resonance of such words as 'time' and 'change' is unmistakable. One is reminded of Ecclesiastes 3.1 — 8 ('To everything there is a season, and a time as every purpose under the heaven'). Ezekiel deals with multiplicity of

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themes in his first book of verse. On the one hand he tries to imitate Eliot and Auden, and on the other, he sees to it that he scrupulously avoids writing in the romantic vein like Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Sri Aurobindo. Thus, Ezekiel's poetry marks a new beginning in the history of Indian English poetry.

*Sixty poems* consists of the unpublished poems from 1945 to 1951 and eighteen new poems written after *A Time to Change*. Ezekiel is here concerned with morality in life. Corruption and other burning issues of the day haunt him without end. The journey of the 'Self' becomes a metaphor in his poetry. This metaphor is further carried to its logical conclusion in his next book of verse, *The Third*. Here the shadow of W.B. Yeats looms large. Ezekiel has learnt from W.B. Yeats how to make poems about the self while keeping away from it. He takes the stance of a detached observer and discusses personal emotions and conduct intellectually in abstractions. He has come to terms with reality and becomes somewhat sceptical as well as cynical. The ideal love like a utopian dream remains largely unrequited. So he 'let her go who gave but would not bind' and learnt that 'the lover's natural language is prose'. The Ezekiel 'turned to poetry for consolation'.

With the publication of *The Unfinished Man* (the title is borrowed from W.B. Yeats) Ezekiel achieved eminence as a poet and got the attention he deserved. The ten poems, written in metrical verse form a sequence concerning the boredom and unhappiness that underlie a presumed settled life. Thus his well known poem ends appropriately with the line, "Home is where we have to gather grace." 'Home' has been taken as the right place where one will be at peace with one self as well as with others. Failure in life at several fronts — profession, marriage and love haunts him without end. But the desire to be good abides. Hence the prayer :

*What ever the enigma,  
The passion of the blood  
Grant me the metaphor  
To make it human good.*

Ezekiel shows his progression and development as a poet in his next volume of poems, *The Exact Name* written between 1960 and 1964 and

published by Writers Workshop in 1964. It contains 20 memorable poems which at once qualify to be in any Anthology of Commonwealth Poetry. The Eliotian hang over is still there but Ezekiel has now learnt the art of writing poetry and 'words obey his call'. Two poems, 'Night of the Scorpion' and 'Poet, Lover, Bird Watcher' stand out as signposts in the great road of Ezekiel's poetry. Ezekiel has not only discovered his voice, but his idiom as well. He has created a new Indian English idiom in 'Night of the Scorpion', which at once distinguishes Indian English poetry from poetry written in English elsewhere in the world. The other poem, 'Poet, Lover, Bird Watcher' is a very compact and thought provoking poem — almost in the manner of W.B. Yeats' "Leda and the Swan" (here, I am not suggesting that the themes of these two poems have anything in common but I am talking of the compactness of thought and the felicity of expression). This is one of the most unimproving poems ever written in the Indian English literature. With *The Exact Name* Ezekiel has earned a name for himself as a leading Indian English poet who can stand comparison with any contemporary commonwealth or Anglo-American poet of our time.

Then came two more successful volumes *Hymns in Darkness* (1976) and *Latter-Day Psalms* (1982) (both published by OUP) which firmly established Ezekiel as India's most renowned poet in the English language of our time. *Hymns in Darkness* belongs to the second phase of his poetic career, the first phase terminated with *The Exact Name* where Ezekiel first made an attempt to create an Indian English idiom in the manner of the African and Caribbean poets in English to establish an identity for Indian English poetry. As we know, between 1967 and 1972 he took LSD several times a year which made him think that there was something Divine, may be a Divine presence in the world that one has to seek. Ezekiel is no longer an atheist, he has become a sceptic who reads about several religions of the world in his effort to soothe his restless mind and come to terms with his disillusioned self. Hence, in *Hymns in Darkness* we find a series of commitments to belong to the place of his birth and the determination to give Indian English poetry, an identity that is both lovable and enduring "Background, casually" written on the occasion of India festival in London reveals the firmness of Ezekiel's determination and desire to belong to the country of his birth.



*The Indian landscape sears my eyes  
I have become a part of it  
To be observed by foreigners.*

....  
*I have made my commitments now  
This is one : to stay where I am.*

The die is cast. There is no turning away from reality, on the other hand, using English in Indian way has caught his imagination. In poems like "The Railway Clerk", "The Truth about the Floods", and "Goodbye party of Miss Pushpa T.S.", "Ganga" and "How the English Lesson Ended" an attempt has been made to recreate Indian characters in their own situation so that there will be immediate participation by the readers. We laugh with such characters but not at them. Apart from them, the idiom in which such poems are written gives a distinct colour to Indian English poetry. Irony becomes Ezekiel's favourite mode in these poems but here it is both gentle and soothing, not bitter and pungent. In some of the poems in this volume Ezekiel tries to speak of love and sex in the manner of ancient Sanskrit poets. We are no longer prudes in public. On the whole with *Hymns in Darkness* begins a new era in Ezekiel's poetic career.

*Latter-Day Psalms* (1982) takes up where *Hymns in Darkness* leaves i.e. the experimentation both in form and content is carried to its logical conclusion. Irony is now coupled with humour and his poetry has blossomed. Here there is variety — realism, love, philosophy, prayer, advice and specific use of Indian English idiom. Paradox, irony, and antithesis have a free play in this volume. The result is astounding. And the poet is duly honoured by the Sahitya Akademi with its Annual Award for 1983. 'Healers', 'Hangover' 'From very Indian poems in Indian English' are highly evocative and enjoyable. They speak to us in our own situation. The poet becomes a prophet and advises :

*Know your mantra, meditate  
release your kundalini  
get your shek awakening  
and float with the spirit  
to your destination.*

"The Indian landscape sears my eyes" has yielded place to reality and the poet like a detached observer sees and describes what happens all around us. He highlights the funny aspect of our rituals,

and way of life in "Jewish Wedding in Bombay", "Hangover" and "The Patriot". In a mock seriousness in the manner of Antony, the poet asks :

*Friends, Romans, Countrymen, I am saying  
( to myself)  
Lend me ears.  
Everything is coming —  
Regeneration, Remuneration, Contraception  
Be patiently, brothers and sisters.*

Indian reality has become a favourite subject for contemplation. Hence, Ezekiel chides us for our folly

*These are the days of family planning.  
I am not against. We have to change with times.  
Whole world is changing. In India also  
We are keeping up. Our progress is progressing.  
Old values are going, new values are coming  
Everything is happening with leaps and bounds.*

With this Ezekiel changes his themes from conventional to unconventional subjects like poverty, sex and benediction. And new themes choose new idioms. The form gives a new look to Ezekiel's poetry in this volume. *Hymns in Darkness* and *Latter-Day Psalms* together give a complete picture of Ezekiel as India's foremost poet in the English language. They are to be read together to evaluate Ezekiel's achievement as an Indian English poet. With these two volumes Ezekiel reaches the peak of his poetic career and the next is anybody's guess — denouement.

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# Dr. Karan Singh's Concept of Integral Education

H.V. Deshpande\*

The book I propose to discuss here is not a volume but a pamphlet of 25 pages only; yet, one has to accept that it is the essence of several books on the subject. Dr. Karan Singh has delivered two lectures on 'Integral Education' in the series, 'Sardar Patel Memorial Lectures' in 1988. The Publication Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India has published them in 1990.

Dr. Karan Singh has been a well known poet, writer, scholar, thinker, chancellor, minister of Education and the founder of the International Centre for Science, Culture and Consciousness. He has travelled a lot and has a deep interest in many disciplines including Sanskrit classics.

The publication of these lectures is, therefore, a recent statement of a decent man on a subject of national significance. The style of his speech is noble, polite, lucid, clear, admirable, respectable, and yet what he says is said without fear or favour, and we all know that 'style is the man'.

After paying his tribute to Sardar Patel in a befitting manner, Dr. Singh turns to his subject. For him, education is a medium through which a civilization renews itself and passes down to generations its knowledge, wisdom, experience and technology which it has received.

Within a couple of paragraphs Dr. Singh illuminates the history of education in India, from the *Guru Shishya* tradition of the *Upanishad* to the British system of education including the Buddhist stream, Islamic influence and Christian missionary way of education.

He believes that the new 'nuclear age' came into being on 6th August 1945 when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. The bomb obliterated half a million people then. Today a single warhead has a capacity of thousand such bombs and there are some fifty thousand nuclear warheads now on the planet earth. He, therefore, says that the old

pattern of thinking is now out of date. He says that we cannot divide education into compartments.

"It has to be holistic, there has to be growth not stagnation".

Thus, in a remarkable way and in an illuminating style Dr. Singh makes us feel the difference in the time. The most outstanding feature of his speech is his well-planned message. He divides his idea of Integral Education into four parts : 'Physical growth', 'Intellectual growth', 'Social growth' and the 'Spiritual growth'. The integration of all these four into one unified element is what he calls 'Integral Education'. However, the significance of his lectures lies in the detailed exposition of the individual elements.

## Physical Growth

He points out that our students are not even taught to sit properly, breathe properly or walk properly. He, therefore, proposes to introduce Yoga, proper posture, proper breathing in schools at the grassroot level. He also highlights the problem of proper nutrition of the children.

"Only two spoonfuls of vitamin A a year can prevent thousands of children from becoming blind".

He strongly pleads for the integration of nutrition programme into the school system. The present sports, mass PT, NCC, NSS, he says, do not show any real commitment to physical fitness. He remarks :

Sports, Yoga, nutrition inputs, food habits are all important. And now education regarding tobacco and alcohol, drugs and promiscuity also have to form part of the system if our younger generations are to be spared these scourges that have become such a ghastly menace in the West.

## Intellectual Growth

After physical growth, Dr. Singh turns to the intellectual growth. Here he pleads for the training of the mind and the aesthetic sensibilities. He says :

What is needed is the universalisation of pri-

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mary education, the vocationalisation of secondary education and the rationalisation of higher education.

This, he says, is essential if our talk of functional democracy is to be meaningful.

He frankly admits that the 10 + 2 formula has failed and therefore, it has to be reorganized. For the vocationalisation of secondary education he proposes a three year course after the tenth standard.

In the field of higher education he finds confusion and waste, and no serious commitment either among the teachers or among the students. In the developed countries, even a son of the richest person there, cannot get into college unless he passes the entrance examination. In India, for want of anything better to do everybody drifts to college. This is a serious point and we shall have to be serious about it. In addition to that, reorganisation of teacher's education, strengthening adult education and reviving the library movement by trying to encourage the young to read are some of the urgent tasks in our academic sphere. Dr. Singh further pleads for the reorganisation and reviewing of the old syllabi in every subject from time to time to make it up-to-date and relevant to the present needs. He complains that in our system there is no appeal to the curiosity and enthusiasm that is inherent in our young college students. "Do we give them any sense of the wonder at the sheer mystery of being alive and conscious?" he asks. In this context, he remarks, "We de-mystify and uglify all our knowledge and put it into such a boring and in attractive format that even the great insights of the human race are reduced to common place things." He also emphasises our rich heritage of music, dance and art and these, he believes, can be used to develop the aesthetic dimension of the young minds. He regrets the neglect of the classics in our education. Classics, for him, play an important role in framing the mind and the sensibility. He recommends the study of Sanskrit for this purpose.

The three language formula, like ten-plus-two formula, he says, has failed. Here he suggests :

"In the Hindi speaking areas we should have Hindi, English and as a third choice, either Sanskrit or Urdu. And in the non-Hindi speaking areas there is regional language, there is English, and alongwith Hindi, we should introduce Sanskrit, because it will make it easier for the South Indian students to learn Hindi if they can go through Sanskrit which is generally the base of their own language. These are important ele-

ments in the development of mind, because if you cannot communicate, you cannot grow, and how can you communicate except through language? One of the greatest tragedies in India today is that language is now looked upon just as common currency."

Dr. Singh concludes his first lecture by the remark, "the Indian mind is second to none in the world, in fact we have this continuing intellectual heritage of many centuries which is quite unique. What we have to do is once again to reorient our inner perceptions".

### Social Growth

The second part of this unique book covers the second lecture of Dr. Singh. The title of this second part is, 'Development of Socially Relevant Moral Values'. This title is very significant in the context of integral education.

The first point Dr. Singh makes is our 'transmitting into a global society'. Politically there is no such thing as a bilateral issue, every issue in the ultimate analysis becomes multilateral. There is the world economic order. He points out :

What price a developing nation is going to get for a particular primary product no longer depends upon that nation but upon decisions taken thousands of miles away.

The space travel and the use of satellite technology make us have a global view and even in culture, there is a trend towards globalization :

I find that young people today are dancing to the same rhythms whether it is Bombay or Beijing, Moscow or Madras, New Delhi or New York. What is happening is globalization of consciousness.

In this situation Dr. Singh urges that we must inculcate socially relevant and desirable values among our students. This is urgent as we experience the rapid erosion of moral and social values in India. Our traditional value system has collapsed without giving place to any viable alternative. This is the tragedy. Dr. Singh says that traditional systems have to go in the changing times, but what is needed is a coherent value system suitable to our social needs. He says that our nation has been reduced to a moral wasteland in which personal greed and sectarian interests take precedence over the larger social good. Corruption, he frankly admits, has become a way of life. He points out "It is here that the Indian educational system has registered its greatest failure". He complains that our education system has failed in making the ideals of



the great visionaries of the freedom movement like Tilak, Tagore, Azad, Aurobindo, Gandhi and Nehru relevant to the consciousness of post-independence India. The high moral, spiritual and intellectual values of these great people have not even remotely been translated into our educational system. 'None of these seem to have had the slightest impact on our educational planners'.

These are the disturbing words and they never fail to provoke serious thoughts in a sensible mind. By the way, who are the educational planners? They are not known to us.

Our experience in this context is really disturbing. The UGC provides funds to the scholars and university teachers to discuss the important issues in education. Seminars and conferences are held. The reports and suggestions are sent to the government and they are filed. Generally the IAS officers are entrusted with educational planning — at least at the state level we see it clearly. The government controls the entire system of education under the guise of the grant-in-aid. The universities are no longer aloof from the politics and the sincere voice of a few is not allowed to be heard by those who have vested interests, in this field. Let the so called 'educational planners' be known to the people. Dr. Singh, in this context remarks :

Despite a series of high level recommendations over the last three decades for the introduction of moral education starting from Sri Prakasa Committee and coming right down to the Kothari Commission, we seem to be totally incapable of incorporating any concrete elements into our curriculum. Even such an elementary matter as obliging students to keep their institutions clean is not accepted.

Dr. Singh has clearly mentioned what those values are — cleanliness, punctuality and politeness. He says :

Individually we are very clean people. But collectively we are one of the dirtiest civilizations on earth because while we have been taught individual cleanliness we are not taught the social value of cleanliness.

The Japanese constantly bow and greet each other with smile and the Chinese respect the elderly persons, because they are taught that way. But in India, Dr. Singh points out, the way women are treated in crowded enclosures is something disgraceful. Our education system must include, says Dr. Singh, Japanese system of 'work ethics'. In Sanskrit, Yoga is skill in works, that is the definition of Yoga in Bhagwad Gita.

Are our children taught these values embedded

in our cultural heritage ? asks Dr. Singh. He believes that no nation can become great unless it has a coherent 'dharma', a fairly clear scale of values to which it is committed. In India, he says, this has now become confused and diluted. This is the most crucial point Dr. Singh has made in his speech. Here we find that he has been successful in diagnosing the real cause of our ailment. This is both serious and urgent. In this context he remarks :

Certainly, there has been tremendous economic growth in the last forty years, but whether as a nation our moral fibre and intellectual calibre have really risen is open to serious doubt. If it has not risen, the responsibility for this is squarely upon our educational system.

Dr. Singh has penetrated deep into the causes of this situation. He believes that the main reason of this is a distorted and anti-religious view of secularism. Secularism never means banishing all moral or spiritual values from our country. It means total freedom to all religions in the country, the equality of all religions and the fact that the state as such has no religion. But it never means that a value which is desirable but also happens to be a religious value should be neglected. In this context Dr. Singh says :

I think the time has now come when we must rethink this whole issue and see what we can do to re-establish certain moral principles in our educational system.

He illustrates the point with Germany and Japan. These nations were totally destroyed in the war, yet they have rebuilt their nations within four decades only. We could not do it because we want all the advantages of democracy but we are not prepared to accept the discipline and responsibility that this involves. Dr. Singh asks, why do we speak constantly about fundamental rights but conveniently forget that fundamental duties are also part of the Constitution? For him the answer lies in the value orientation in our educational system. He says

It can be done if there is clear cut desire to do so, and in a manner which will not offend anybody and which, I am sure, will be widely welcomed throughout the country.

### Spiritual Growth

Dr. Singh then turns to his fourth and the last part of his lectures. It is 'the inner dimension of spiritual growth'. He speaks of the five concepts from Vedanta. The first is that the entire universe with billions upon billions of galaxies is permeated by the same invisible force. The second is that every individual is divine. The third is the principle and faith that the world is one family 'Vasudhaiva

*Kutumbakam*'. The fourth is that the Truth is one though the wise call it by many names, and the fifth is the welfare of all sections of society. We must have compassion, not only for human beings but for all living creatures. He says, 'We talk today of environmental values, wild life and eco-system. We have been taught in our heritage that the earth is sacred, the rivers are sacred, it is ultimately those forests that capture water for us and make civilization possible'. Dr. Singh in this context, complains that from primary to Ph.D. level a student is not exposed to these ideas even once. 'Are we justified in doing this?' he asks.

Dr. Karan Singh concludes his second and the final lecture with a very significant remark :

What is needed not only in education but in all spheres of national life is the capacity for clear and coherent thought, leading to a carefully inter-locking series of policy decisions aimed at meeting the multiple challenges that we face. And education, dealing as it does with the very texture of human consciousness, is surely an area which must receive top priority ... an integral education developed in India can, in fact, become a model for other countries if it succeeds in integrating science and spirituality, the inner and the outer ...

If the greatness of a book depends not on the number of pages printed but on the number of significant, relevant and useful great thoughts, 'Integral Education' by Dr. Singh is really a great book. This book is great because it disturbs the readers with its 'elevated thoughts'. This book is great because it awakens the reader's mind from the 'lethargy of custom' and directs it to the loveliness and wonders of the world before us. This book is great because it provides a concrete plan to come out of the present chaos of education in India — great because it is a recent statement of a decent man in education in India.

This book might have been the source of the 'New Policy of Education, A Plan for Action', by Late Rajiv Gandhi. If so, we must see that the original ideas of Dr. Karan Singh should not be either distorted or diluted in the implementation of the programme.

Every educational institution, from primary to research level, must have a copy of this *Educational Geeta* (may be in translation in the regional languages). But what is more important is that everybody belonging to the group of the unknown 'educational planners' must have a copy of it also if at all we wish to make our educational planning really relevant and meaningful.

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# A Source Book of Vaisnava-Tradition and Jagannathism

S. Biswal\*

Lord Jagannatha is the greatest institution of Vaisnava-tradition. It embodies within itself the principles of secularism, religious tolerance, co-existence, equality of castes and creeds and of socialism. The socio-cultural life of Oriyas is totally reflected in Jagannathism. Jagannatha-Cult got impetus after Sri Chaitanya had come to Orissa and preached Chaitanyaism. Broken in spirit, the people then had sought solace in the Radhakrishna-Cult and the Neo-Vaisnavism movement vastly captured the Oriya literature. Chaitanya considered Jagannatha to be Krsna himself. Actually, the uniqueness of Lord Jagannatha lies in the fact that originally a deity worshipped by the autochthonous Sabaras, gradually embraced all the religious sects like Jainas, Bauddhas, Saivas, Saktas, Vaisnavas, Ganapatyas, Sauras and Nathas etc. Consequently, the Cult of Jagannatha came to be regarded as the religion of the masses or 'Gana Dharma'.

The present work *Studies in Jagannatha-Cult* by B.L. Ray (Classical Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1993) contains eleven chapters on various topics relating to the Jagannatha-Cult and the Vaisnava-tradition of Orissa in a coherent and mutually connected manner. According to the author, the central task here is to explore the concept of 'Purusottama' and 'Krsna' in the elements of Jagannatha-Cult. A substantial inquiry into the Jagannatha-Tattva and Jagannatha-Mahatmya has been undertaken to determine the origin and antiquity of Lord Jagannatha. This book throws light on the concept and philosophy of Lord Jagannatha and its Cult.

Jagannathism has been deeply analysed in many authentic texts like Sri Purusottama-Ksetramahatmyam of the Skanda-Purana, Niladri-Mahodayam, Bamadeva-Samhita, Gopalarcana Vidhih, Niladrinatha-Puja Vidhih and Durgotsava-Candrika etc. It has also been referred to in the Vedas and in the Sidhhanta-Darpanah. The Jagannatha-temple chronicle called Madala Panji records the history of Jagannatha-temple and its culture. However, this small treatise of Ray carries interesting information on the two important festivals of Lord Jagannatha — the Car-festival and the Na-

vakalevara-festival. It generates stimulating ideas on the vedic mantras used in the worship of Jagannatha-Triad. An attempt has also been made by the author to present an account of Vaisnava-tradition associated with Lord Jagannatha and His great abode and throne.

Study of puranic geographical accounts reconstructs our knowledge on historical geography of a country or a state. The descriptions given in the vedas, puranas, and samhitas relating to the country, its people, society and culture, mountains, forests, rivers, lakes, cities and towns open up a new dimension in the geographical situation of the country itself. The environmental aspects of the vedas and puranas also supply a fresh knowledge on the geography of India. This small treatise on Jagannatha-Cult adheres to the puranic geography of Odradesa (the present Orissa) to some extent. The land of Orissa is known as the land of Lord Jagannatha. Due to royal patronage in the past, Jagannatha came to be regarded as the ruler of Utkala, Kalinga or present Orissa. The spread of Vaisnavism and stretching of the boundary of Odradesa during the reign of different kings and emperors provide a good ground for the development of Jagannathism in and outside our county. Obviously, Ray's attempt in this line generates new ideas on the historical geography of Utkala and specifically on the situation of Jagannatha-temple and its estates.

Another aspect of this work is the treatment of mode of worship of Jagannatha-triad. The analysis of the Vedic mantras used in the worship of Jagannatha, Balabhadra and Subhadra uncovers the very concepts of Om, Hrim and Klim. It also emphasises the fact that the modes of worship are partly Vedic, partly Tantric and partly Puranic. Consequently mode of worship of Lord Jagannatha is the embodiment of Vedic worship, Tantric Puja and Puranic recitations.

The present book 'Studies in Jagannatha-Cult' also reveals some features of the sthala purana 'Niladri-Mahodayam' which is an authentic source of Lord Jagannatha and its temple. Thus, we have an opportunity to gather some information about Jagannatha-Cult and its tradition through the present volume.

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# Bhagwan, the God that Failed

A.P. Sharma\*

Hugh Milne wrote his immortal work, "*Bhagwan, The God That Failed*" during the early eighties. By then he had already lived with Rajneesh for almost fifteen years and had seen him so closely and intimately that a very few of his followers would have seen and understood him that much vividly.

Hugh Milne, born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1948, from his early childhood had strange and unfathomable dreams to become either a wise man in the hills, a philosopher or a sage. Perhaps it was his highest yearning for himself in this life. At the age of thirteen he wrote in a school essay that he wanted to be a philosopher in his life. Most of his classmates, at that time, wanted to be engine drivers or something else. Hugh's teacher read out his essay to the class and later on showed it to his colleagues, who reacted favourably towards it. It left a strange mark in his mind. Hugh felt as if some inner secret had come into the open at last.

Perhaps obsessed with that secret inner feeling, Hugh, after completing his education and later when he was working on himself in the therapy groups, sensed desperately the need for a personal leap. The voice inside his heart told him "Get out of this rut, this money-spinning trap and find out what this intuition is about. The voice of reason butted in." Perhaps, the die, had then been cast.

## In Search of a Guru

Without caring for his own living or earning, Hugh during late 1972 gradually threw himself into the hands of fate and waited to see what would happen next. It was during those days that one of his friends Bill introduced him to a lady known as Veena, who had been visiting England, then, to set up a meditation centre. Bill introduced: "Meet Veena". He continued, "She's just off the 707 from Bombay, and has instructions to set up the world's first meditation centre for a man they call Bhagwan. That is him in the little picture hanging from Veena's neck. Look at him". When Bill had finished

his introduction, Veena spoke softly in her South African accent. She said: "He lives in his small flat in Bombay, and has a few disciples he calls *sannyasis*. He gives them individual instructions, new names and a mala — that's this necklace. It's all great fun".

Hugh took a deep look at the photo. His first thoughts were that the man in the photo looked exactly like the Maharishi that the Beatles had followed for a time.

Veena, in the mean time, continued her conversation. She said, "There are four stages (of meditation), and Bhagwan says we must wear loose clothing and a blindfold." Listening to her Hugh decided to give all that a go. This was the beginning of Hugh's involvement with Acharya Rajneesh. His desire gradually grew to enter the *Panth*.

That morning when the meditation was over, mint tea, honey, biscuits were served to the participants who were ten in number. That was followed by a recorded talk given by the man they called Bhagwan. He talked on the cassette about the ancient philosophy of tantra. It was a kind of rediscovering the mystic East.

Once Hugh had decided to travel to Bombay at the earliest opportunity, he tried to read everything which he could about Bhagwan, and tantra as well. Though he had for several years tried to seek the truth, he was becoming ever more interested in Eastern Philosophy. Through tantra, it is said, passion and indulgence come to have a purpose. They are steps towards the journey of self discovery. In one of his recorded speeches Bhagwan mentioned that in an earlier period of Indian history tantra was a major religion and had plenty of devotees. The temples of Khajuraho and Konark are said to have been created during tantric religion.

The basic idea of tantra, expressed by Bhagwan, is to awaken the dynamic energy(s) and find its origin at the base of the spine. The ultimate goal of tantra is spiritual clarity, the disappearance of the personal and individual ego into greater awareness and to reach a blissful state of being. Buddha called this procedure or state *Samadhi*, which he meant 'as

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beyond the beyond, where nothing exists.' Jesus called this state of mind 'the Kingdom of God'. Bhagwan referred to it as Enlightenment.

Hugh seemed to have been convinced that tantra was the glorified ideal of free indulgence and that could very well explain why Bhagwan's teaching seemed to be so fascinating to the young westerners in the nineteen seventies.

Tantra seemed to Hugh Milne to be a wonderful thing. Yet he doubted whether he would ever have embraced that path had it not been for Bhagwan whose recorded speeches aroused in him a great desire to meet him personally.

### The Home Coming

Hugh Milne met Bhagwan in his Bombay flat on March 31st, 1973. From the moment he entered his clean, tidy and beautifully furnished room, he had the overwhelming feeling that he had finally come home. He felt that there was his spiritual father who understood every thing. It was really a magical sensation which made him feel that Bhagwan was inside his mind as nobody else had ever been able to be. From the moment his delicate hands touched Hugh's hands he felt as if he was in another world. Bhagwan seemed to radiate a sense of unconditional love which was enchanting. During that meeting called a '*darshan*', Hugh felt as if time had stopped. His worries seemed to have disappeared. Perhaps that was the man Hugh had been seeking. Now he did not need to seek elsewhere.

When Hugh met Bhagwan in his small but well decorated flat in Bombay, he lived with two full-time Indian female assistants, Kranti and Laxmi, and an English disciple who was also his lover. She had been named Vivek meaning awareness. She was perhaps twenty three years old and was one of the first Westerners to search out Bhagwan. She met him in 1971 and stayed with him quite steadfast throughout all the vicissitudes Bhagwan had endured.

As there was no established Ashram in those days and Rajneesh Foundation International had not yet been established, although Bhagwan had already become famous in India for his lecture tours, the Westerners who came to visit him lived in hotels. Hugh rented a room at a Bombay hotel and made an appointment to see Bhagwan. Laxmi sat outside his door and kept his appointment

diary and carefully checked everyone who wanted to go in. Bhagwan was highly allergic to any kind of scent, whether natural body odour or applied perfume. After relinquishing his university post of a Philosophy lecturer, Rajneesh propagated about him in words as if he was very special and different.

As Hugh approached the door of his room, he felt very nervous, Hugh opened the door slowly and peered around. The room was empty except Bhagwan, who was wearing very clean and pressed robes, had dainty little hand embroidered towel over one wrist, was sitting so quietly and peacefully in a corner. "Come here, come here", Bhagwan directed Hugh gaily. He had deep brown eyes, arching eyebrows and quite a big over-flowing moustache. "Come closer, come closer," he commanded, Hugh went upto him and sat down quite close to him.

"So, you have come from London, hmmm" Bhagwan enquired. He continued asking simple questions about the people in London, including Hugh's age and address, how was his flight from London and did he rent a hotel ?, etc. At last there was a direct personal question.

"How is your meditation ? Is there pain in the legs ? That will go away. Don't worry. Better to lie down. Hmmm. Go to meditation on Chowpatty Beach in morning, then go to your room. That will be good, hmmm." As these questions continued, he was holding Hugh's one hand in his hand as if he was practising the gentlest ever form of mind detection. It was a kind of investigation by touch temperature.

As Bhagwan held Hugh's hand, he had a strange feeling. He felt that Bhagwan's soul was slowly slipping inside his own and in a fraction of a second Hugh felt vital information transferring into his soul. Then Bhagwan released Hugh's hand and moved his left arm up behind him. Hugh sensed a presence just over the crown of his head. Then he stopped his hand there and stared off into the middle distance, sensing, checking, listening, all his attention being focused on to Hugh. After that Bhagwan moved his hand to his forehead and pressed gently. Hugh felt that every Chakra — the seven centres of energy in the body according to ancient Eastern tradition — was directly touched. Hugh felt deeply content. The orientation seemed to be complete.

Bhagwan after freeing Hugh's hand shifted slightly in his chair, and enquired: 'Are you ready for *Sannyas*?' '*Sannyas*' was traditionally the state of renunciation and a '*Sannyasi*' one who had renounced all the worldly goods, possessions and relationships to be one with God. In fact Bhagwan had adopted the word '*Sannyasis*' to refer to those who had left their previous lives to follow him. After getting a positive response from Hugh, Bhagwan expressed, "Good, you are ready. Much will be happening to you. You are ready. Hmmm." Then Bhagwan, as customary decided to give Hugh a new name. He picked up a long string of beads which looked like a collection of brown nuts.

He then passed the garland of beads over Hugh's head. After that he handed Hugh the piece of paper where he had written his new name, "Swami Shivamurti". Bhagwan explained what it meant "Swami means master or lord of yourself, your own destiny. Shiva is one of the Hindu Gods, and 'Murti' means made in the image of Shiva".

### The Spiritual Leader

Mohan Chandra Rajneesh showed promise at school and his father, a cloth merchant, who was Jain by religion, could manage to put him through university education. Bhagwan claims to have been professor at Mahakoshal Arts College, a part of Jaipur University.\*\* Rajneesh began public speaking in 1964. In 1966 he left the university to become a travelling public speaker. Soon he developed a reputation as a good orator. The Rajneesh Foundation International was established in 1975 when more Westerners started joining the Foundation. It claims that until 1970, Rajneesh travelled India by train and delivered lectures of a highly political nature. A great number of Indians attended these lectures. It was during that time that Rajneesh met Laxmi, who was then working as a civil servant at a large public building in Bombay. She, as reported by Hugh, fell in love with him at first sight and soon became Bhagwan's groupie who was undemanding and unquestioning and remained his devoted admirer during years when he was recognized as a public speaker.

In those days Laxmi had supreme position and anyone who wanted to see Bhagwan had first to get

Laxmi's permission. When Bhagwan decided to stop travelling round the country a flat was arranged for his permanent stay in Bombay. Laxmi decorated it according to Bhagwan's wishes. At the time when Rajneesh was lecturing at the university, he had gained the reputation of something like a Romeo and his talks on sex became the cause to attract Westerners. For many years, as described by Hugh, a utopian community grew through the love and enlightenment of a spiritual leader. But Hugh discloses that almost from the start the reality was somewhat different.

The very first *sannyasis* who were attracted by Bhagwan were Indians. Laxmi and some Westerners who were his first *sannyasis* had to wear saffron clothing. Bhagwan wore very soft homespun cotton and a shawl round his shoulders. All the *sannyasis* would gather round him in his flat until dawn and listen to his stories and jokes. It all seemed to be great fun. As these activities went on and on, Bhagwan's reputation as a spiritual leader grew. In the meantime Laxmi through her publisher friend arranged for the booklet *Rajneesh A Glimpse* to be published. She told hundreds of people about Rajneesh and gradually they became curious to know him.

It soon became clear that better and larger premises were needed then. Therefore the present flat, with the courtesy of a biscuit company in Bombay, was arranged.

As Bhagwan's reputation grew further, people were attracted to listen to him. Now people wanted to see him day and night, but Bhagwan also needed some uninterrupted sleep too. So Laxmi herself offered to fulfil a dual role — to be a secretary and a receptionist. Laxmi told Hugh that in 1972 if Bhagwan got a right offer he was ready to go to America. But by then it didn't come. It was about that time that Rajneesh changed his title from 'Acharya' to 'Bhagwan', which meant 'The Blessed One'. It also apparently meant 'Maharishi' — which also meant 'great seer'. Laxmi felt it was the perfect name for him.

But it was hard for the Indians to accept Rajneesh as 'Bhagwan' because it seemed to them far too reverential a name for this self-promoting guru who used to sell his published works to small bookshops and lecture around by late 1960's. In 1973 when Hugh arrived in India, Bhagwan had already acquired a reputation as the 'sex-guru'. He

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\*\*Perhaps Hugh Milne has referred Jaipur University instead of Jabalpur University in his book, "Bhagwan — The God That Failed" (P. 52) Published by Calvin Books, Great Britain, 1986.

became an arch advocate of the female orgasm and devoted much time to explain all about sex. Such talks could have been embarrassing but Bhagwan referred to all that in such spiritual terms and very carefully worded, saying, how tantric sex would lead to enlightenment. Therefore, none felt embarrassed.

From Bombay Bhagwan travelled to different parts of the country to organise short duration camps for practising meditation. One such camp, attended by Hugh was a ten-day meditation camp at Mount Abu in Rajasthan. The camp was physically quite exhausting as there were five active and dynamic meditations every day. Most of the meditations were led by Bhagwan personally and were held on a pair of tennis courts, where a makeshift wooden dias had been set up in one corner.

Although such camps had sometimes scandalous reputation of having nude meditations, Bhagwan's style of communication was so impressive that the scandals were left far behind. At Mount Abu Hugh himself heard of such a nude meditation camp but even then, there were two to three hundred rich followers at Abu during the time Hugh attended the camp there. Why and how Bhagwan attracted so many people to listen to him, is reported by Hugh himself. Hugh describes

"As Bhagwan talks, the sheer persuasiveness of his oratory, the hypnotic sibilances of his lingering 's' 's', his habit of extending, the last syllable of every sentence, conspire to lull, reassure, inspire and energise the audience. I can well understand how Bhagwan became the School Debating Champion. His words are like a love song specially for you and none others".

In fact Bhagwan's message seemed to have aimed at every individual heart. Everyone, among those three hundred felt that he/she was his only real disciple. Every single person in the audience felt exactly the same and as Hugh compared notes afterwards, they agreed that they had all been similarly affected or 'blessed out'.

At the camp in meditation sessions Bhagwan sitting on a specially constructed platform, would shout: "Be total. Put your whole energy into it. Hold nothing back." These words were delivered so intensely that they created immediate effect on each person. The people in the camp ranged from Vietnamese to French who had been ex-heroin junkies,

English and American hippies, and rich and more professional people. These, in fact, were Bhagwan's future messengers to the West where they would spread his words so that by the end of the decade there was a Rajneesh Centre in almost every major city in the Western world.

During such camps Rajneesh movement was referred to as the 'Life Awakening Movement.' When Bhagwan spoke he had behind him a banner which proclaimed, "Surrender to me, and I will transform you. That is my promise, Rajneesh." The banner was about twenty feet long, and also contained the symbol of a cupped palm holding a small candle flame. By then Bhagwan had already acquired a reputation for surprise, ingenuity and brilliance when he spoke to the chosen audience, Hugh stated.

Truly speaking, Bhagwan claimed to have been self-taught and he would say, "In this life I have never had a Master. In my many past lives, I have studied with many masters from every tradition. Now I bring to you a higher form of teaching." At these words, Hugh and others agreed that he was certainly the genuine person.

Thus from one camp to another and from one city to the other Hugh moved at the instructions of Bhagwan in the desire to get self-awareness or permanent bliss. From Mount Abu, he went to Kailash, a lonely place about four hundred miles east of Bombay. Everyone at Kailash had been at the Abu camp. Although all the *sannyasis* had come from different background, upbringing and possessed different personalities, they all were united in their love for Bhagwan, and the words he had said to them in their individual *darshans* were their guiding lights. When the work conditions seemed rather impossible they hung on to those words. Most of the people who had gathered at Kailash were ordered to stay there for six months but Hugh was told to stay there in silence for three months. Gradually instructions were given to remove privileges, reduce food, free time and days off. Therefore, the camp life was not that easy as people would normally reckon. Yet, Rajneesh was never short of disciples, both foreigners and rich Indians, who would sit with him in meditation sessions for hours together.

What was it about Bhagwan that so attracted people? Hugh narrated that Bhagwan was undoubtedly very confident of himself and of what he was saying. He was intensely, almost overpoweringly, charismatic, a most persuasive orator and no



mean magician. He had gathered round him a small group of intelligent, attractive and enlightened people. He himself did seem to be enlightened". (Page 74.)

During the *darshan* sessions Hugh often felt that Bhagwan was a healer, a mind reader, a clairvoyant, a soothsayer, and the wisest man he had ever met. But at times he found it very difficult being ordered around all the time, being told what to wear, what to do, where to go, who to sleep with. He thought whether he should go back to England or accept all that until it became too difficult to bear. But Hugh continued to live around him for years together.

Before Hugh had joined the Commune, he had heard much about Rajneesh. He came over as a potent mixture of poet, artist, lover, sexual alchemist, sensual libertine, master magician, court jester and without any doubt one of the wisest men who had ever lived. He was someone who seemed to promise the infinite, who hinted at worlds within worlds, knowledge beyond knowledge. (P.38) Thus, not only for Hugh but for others too his reputation became irresistible. All of them who heard about such characteristics contained in one man, developed strong desire to meet that person. Thus people from far and wide, mostly rich people, people who desired to attain enlightenment or self-awareness gathered in the camps.

Gradually Poona became world famous. As 1975 was about to close, there was a tremendous sense of awakening in Poona. It was as if a sleeping giant had been aroused. More and more people were coming intending to stay just for a week, but remaining in or near the ashram for years. The English and Germans were the initial leaders. Later on French and Italians started coming in great number. Soon countries outside Europe and America began to hear of Bhagwan, and people started to come in great numbers to join him at Poona. A very high proportion of these new people were professionals — engineers, doctors, lawyers, authors, artists and architects, most of them sold up all their belongings to live with Bhagwan and by mid-1975 the Western visitors began to outnumber the Indians. (P. 127) By this time Hugh had several quite distant jobs. His main task at that time was to be Bhagwan's bodyguard, but he was also Laxmi's bodyguard if need arose. Besides he took charge of security arrangements inside the big hall for major celebrations. At times Hugh was also Laxmi's high-speed driver when she needed to go to Bombay and also worked

in the darkroom and took most of the ashram photographs. In addition, he was also responsible for Bhagwan's lab tests and medications.

As soon as Bhagwan made Hugh his bodyguard, he started practising rabbit punches and wrestling blows on the roof of Bhagwan's house. It was little before that, that an Indian woman arrived there who was to play a vital role in Rajneesh's organisation. Her name was Sheela. First she worked in the ashram kitchen. Hugh had already met her a year ago when she visited the ashram with her American Husband, Mare Hearris Silverman — renamed 'Chinmya'. Sheela was born in Baroda, a town about four hundred miles away from Bombay. In 1969 she married an American Jew who later on converted to Rajneesh himself. Sheela thus by virtue of her marriage, obtained the 'green card' and became legally entitled to live and work in U.S.A. When she returned to Poona, Bhagwan gave her special attention and her position in ashram grew stronger.

The ashram environment by 1976 was quite lucid for making free love and it was not long before that Hugh and Sheela were attracted to each other and lived in a very close proximity for quite a long time (P.133) Although Bhagwan encouraged complete physical freedom, he also encouraged frequent changes of partners among ashram members. For some of these matters the ashram was already becoming famous in the outside world. It was about this time that frequent press reports began to appear about the sensational taboo-free environment at Poona. This helped in attracting more and more people from far and wide. People started becoming eager to have Bhagwan's '*darshan*.' Rows of ropes were laid down to separate the genuine disciples from the visitors. Hugh, by then, had also been assigned a role to take good photographs in the newly built auditorium. Bhagwan was very fussy about how he appeared in photographs. He would scrutinize all photographs very carefully and allowed certain pictures only to be included in books and photographic records. This was the time that Bhagwan was at the pinnacle of his fame and was accepted in most of the countries of the world as a spiritual leader.

### The Decline

There are not many people in the world who after reaching the highest point in their lives were able to retain it until they died. The examples of Mahavir Swami, Buddha, Mohammed, Mahatma Gandhi and Krishnamurti are there. Christ became

son of God after his crucifixion and is being followed by millions of people throughout the world.

Rajneesh's story is quite different from the above named spiritual people. Rajneesh became very famous during his life time and was dethroned from that position little before he died. What an agony ! In fact there are not many writers who have so candidly depicted Bhagwan's character and personality than Hugh Milne, who lived with him in his ashram at Poona and abroad, performed different roles there, indulged sensuously with different kinds of women at the instance of Bhagwan, and watched Bhagwan from such a close proximity that he has been able to describe him quite innocently and candidly. Hugh describes that drug running was a common feature as it helped to finance the ashram. Those people who were successful in drug peddling, gave huge donations. Whenever a disciple was about to make a drug run, he would ask Bhagwan whether it was good time to go to Thailand. "Wednesday would be good," he would say, or "Don't go until Friday," knowing exactly what they meant. By 1980 he had two white Rolls Royces in Poona, which was a sort of unheard luxury in India (P. 155-6). But still Bhagwan fell deep down from his throne and could never recover that position. Drug peddling alone could bring anyone down to any extent. Bhagwan was not an exception.

Hugh describes that by 1985 when Rajneesh had reached America, "his movement had more than twenty-eight bank accounts, including at least twelve in Switzerland. Twenty four corporations, foundations, institutions and universities had been set up by Rajneeshees worldwide. But the movement still owed more than \$ 4 million in unpaid taxes in India and federal taxes were under scrutiny in the U.S.A. A *sannyasi* graduate from New Mexico won a \$ 1.7 million settlement against Sheela for non-repayment of a loan arranged in Poona. During the trial in Portland, the judge had to order Rajneesh to stop harassing witnesses in lifts and hallways. (P. 294)

During the summer of 1985, the Oregonian ran a thorough twenty part investigation of Rajneeshee activities. The series was entitled 'For Love or Money', and was well researched. In November 1985 a plot to kill Portland Attorney General, Charles Turner, was uncovered. In September of 1985, Sheela, after receiving some tip about the imminent Federal Grand Jury, left the ranch suddenly and flew to Germany. Right then Rajneesh unearthed her secret activities and denounced Sheela as a dic-

tator and a despot and blamed her even of murdering her first husband, Chinmaya.

Meanwhile the grand juries, the immigration authorities and the state investigators were all investigating against Rajneesh. In order to save Rajneesh from humiliation efforts were made by the Rajneeshees to charter a jet from Charlotte to take the passengers to Bermuda or Nassau straightaway as at these two places he could stay without a visa. But the Charlotte police were notified about such flight, and surrounded them at the Charlotte airport in the early hours. Everybody on board was searched and taken into custody. Rajneesh was held alone in a cell in the hospital wing and a nurse was stationed to watch him round the clock lest he should commit suicide.

After spending more than two weeks in various jails across America, Rajneesh, on November 13th, pleaded guilty to several courts of arranging sham marriages and lying to federal officials. He was fined \$ 400,000, ordered to leave the country and given a ten year suspended sentence. (P. 30) Thousands of *sannyasis* all round the world must be watching in agony and surprise the fall of their spiritual master. One of Hugh's old *sannyasi* friend wrote to him about his impressions of watching Rajneesh on television. "It was frightening and pathetic to see what had happened to him," he wrote "..... Rajneesh's rage and frustration and greed and duplicity were totally evident."

With the fall of the spiritual leader, Hugh's search also came to an end in this direction. Hugh, perhaps finally discovering truth about Rajneesh expresses, that from the very beginning the hallmarks of Rajneesh's empire were secrecy, duplicity, propaganda and shameless exaggeration. Hugh remarks :

"I hope this account will help to put it in perspective, shedding light on how and why sane and intelligent people are attracted to gifted, charismatic and manipulative leaders like Rajneesh" (P.309.)

Hugh's first hand account of a spiritual leader, Rajneesh, has been not only fascinating and interesting, but revealing as well. Who could know so much about Rajneesh so clearly and vividly except Hugh and those who lived with him round the clock for years and performed different roles in his ashram. Hugh's style of writing is so lucid that he has poured in pages after pages truth about Rajneesh, which is bewildering, horrifying, agonising and disappointing.

# My Favourite Reading

Prem Bhatnagar\*

In modern times novel has become most favourite reading of the society. The main reason of its extraordinary popularity is that a well written novel presents a true picture of human life as also of international problems in method and technique. When I speak of technique, I speak of nearly everything. Till 1990 I was much interested in the reading of English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi novels but after that I have switched over to critical studies and education. I have read a number of books of fiction including original story collections. Three books which have influenced me the most during this period are :

1. *Hindu-Muslim relationship* written by S. Rehmatulla, Head of the Hindi Deptt., University of Madras;
2. *Evaluation of Hindi Novels of Mauritius*, by Hem Raj Nirmum, former Prof. of Hindi, M.D. University, Rohtak; and
3. *The Vice-Chancellors Remember*, edited by M.V. Mathur and Ramesh Arora of Jaipur.

For more than five decades communalism has been the talk of the day in clubs, seminars, literature and society. There is a plethora of books on Hindu-Muslim relationship, secularism and communal harmony. Writers like H.Y. Siddiqui confuse Secularism with making allowances for communalism in one form or the other. No wonder, they have the pride of place in one particular community. But one book that can kill the germs of communal hatred amongst the two major communities is *Hindu-Muslim Relationship in Hindi Novels* produced by Rehmatulla for his Ph.D. degree under able guidance of Prof. Ram Babu Sharma of the Department of Hindi of Sri Venkateswara University of Andhra Pradesh.

The key question is why this book has left an ever lasting impression on my mind? The answer is simple and obvious. The author in the first chapter has very carefully depicted the true picture of po-

litical, social and religious circumstances which ultimately led to the partition of India. In this chapter he has given emphasis on the special historical circumstances i.e. "Two Nation Theory" preached by Dr. Mohmad Iqbal in his presidential address at Muslim League's annual Conference in 1930 and then pursued by Mohmad Ali Jinah. On the basis of it Mr. Atlee, the then Prime Minister of Britain announced the partition of the country on 3rd June, 1947. Rehmatulla writes, "Patel was totally opposed to this conception of partition but he declared on 11.8.1942 in one of his forceful speeches at Ram Leela Ground in Delhi that while sitting in Central Government he found the poison of communalism right from a peon to the authorities at the top." (P.11) Nehru in the eyes of Dr. Rehmatulla was a day dreamer. To him India was a multi-lingual, multi-communal and multi-religious society and only state policy of secularism could hold the nation together. But Nehru's dream shattered with partition as communal riots erupted even in free India and Pakistan leading to exchange of population of the two communities. In spite of hatredness preached by selfish leaders a few nationalists taught us the lesson of love and brotherhood with the result of the decision of crores of Muslims who preferred to live in India and worked for national integration. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Zakir Husain, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, and Asaf Ali are amongst the dominant nationalist leaders who worked for national outlook and consciousness.

In his doctoral thesis Rehmatulla has not only given a biography of those novels depicting Hindu-Muslim relationship but has also presented an analytical study of his chosen novel's distinctive characters. From *Karambhum* of Prem Chand the author talks of perpetual friendship of Amarkant and Salim who lived and died for the cause of communal harmony. Amarkant's love for Sakina in this novel is ever lasting. In the second chapter the author scrutinises the avenues for love and tolerance for other communities and religions in the works of the novelist, Yashpaul. *Deshdrohi Party Comrade*, *Jhoota-Sach*, *Meri-Teri-Uski Bat* are the significant examples of Hindu-Muslim love and sacrifices. In *Insan* of Yagdutta Sharma, nationalists were divided between "Changers" and "non-Changers", but the hero Rambabu and Azad are both 'Non-

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Changers". They have a feeling of brotherhood. They only talk of humanism. When the author writes on *Aprajit* of revolutionary novelist, Manmath Nath Gupta, he tactfully analyses the long struggle of Hindu-Muslim Communalism. In *Topishukla* of Rahi Masum Raza, the author has praised the pivotal role of its characters to deal with the critical situations of unemployment, poverty and communal hatred.

"Hindu-Muslim Relationship and political consciousness" is the subject of the third chapter. The author has aptly and very carefully shown the identity of the characters in national political scenes. The characters of *Begam Hazrat Mahal*, *Satimahal Ka Chaura*, *Insan*, *Laute Hue Musafir*, *Tamas*, *Mere Teri Uski Bat*, *Bayalis*, *Bhule-Bisre Chitra*, etc. are full of nationalist views. They face all the communal agitations firmly, most of them have participated in peasants movement and national movement for independence and their "Open Umbrella" image of nationalism is unique.

The fourth chapter is really heartening. In it I find the findings of the author in conformity with his own belief of Hindu-Muslim brotherhood. Its title is "Religious consciousness : Hindu-Muslim Relationship", which begins with the sentences, "Religion has an important place in human life, in the name of religion there were conflicts in all the countries in all times. World history is full of such conflicts...." (p. 77). Nations' quest for dominance on religious basis is a universal truth in author's view. The writer has praised Indian people's religious tolerance by giving a number of quotations from a number of Hindi novels like *Laute Hue Musafir*, *Topishukla*, *Zindginama*, *Adha Gaon*, *Kayakalp* etc. The empires could not be saved from fall because of religious disharmony, this is what the author has concluded. In his view religion unfortunately has been in the clutches of dogmatic fundamentalist leaders who like to create strong ethos and demolish the other models which favour a case of other religions.

Chapter V entitled "Socio-Cultural Consciousness: Hindu-Muslim Relationship" reveals how Muslim rulers after regaining a strong central rule with Delhi as capital tried to do away with Hindu customs and culture on one side and some broad-minded emperors like Akbar, Jahangir, and Sufi Saints on the other side fought with religious 'me-

nance' effectively and spread the message of love and tolerance, brotherhood, service and sacrifice. For this purpose the author has taken pains in identifying out some couples of different religions in the novels like *Meri Teri Uski Bat*, *Tamas*, *Topishukla*, *Jhoota Sach* etc. The broadminded couples have tried their best to minimise religious controversies. The plot and characters contained in these novels make interesting reading.

Last two chapters are very short but sweet. The author could have also written on the economic aspects of the two religious communities. The book is however praise worthy and commends itself for reading by all communities.

Nirmum's *Evaluation of Hindi Novels of Mauritius* successfully describe the long struggle for independence of Mauritian people as depicted by its two great Hindi novelists namely Abhimanu Anant and Ramdev Dhurender in their novels. The writer talks of technique and plot of Hindi novels of Mauritius. As Mauritius is surrounded by sea from all sides, it is natural to encounter flood fury scenario. No body can forget the 1945 floods which caused misery in Mauritius. Abhimanu Anant has depicted flood scenario in most of his novels. On one side people look for shelter to save their lives, on the other the lovers are out to enjoy by roaming near sea as depicted in *Shefali* where we find Shefali and her lover, Ashit, seeking pleasure hand in hand near the sea shore. It is clear that *Shefali* is a novel of character technique. In *Ek Bigha Pyar* Anant narrates the story of a family who is on the look out for a safe shelter when it has already faced flood destruction in their village twice. Same is the description of village life in *Chautha Prani*. So most of the novels of Mauritius are descriptive in technique, though one or two novels are analytical and symbolical in form. Most Hindi novelists of Mauritius have written novels of action. As we know, these novels demand a strictly developed plot and a well knit story, they are successful in presenting these two fabrics in it. Novels of Abhimanu Anant hold fast to the matter in hand, to the thing that has been made and the manner of its making, nor let the reader forget that the whole of the matter is contained within the finished form of the thing to which Anant clutches very cleverly. This is in short what can be said about Anant's techniques.

"Labour movement : Circumstances and life



struggle" are depicted in *Lal Pasina* of Abhimanu Anant. Indian labour was exploited in Mauritius. Anant has depicted labour struggle in most of his novels in general but *Gandhiji Bole The*, in particular. In this novel he talks of labour consciousness, their love for education, their struggle for participation in political power and adoption of the method of *Satyagraha* as preached by Gandhiji. Police used barbarous methods to repress the mass labour movement. It is only after 1922 that some impartial intellectuals tried to side with labour unions. Ramdev Dhurindher's novel *Poochho is maati se*, we read that agricultural labour did not enjoy the right of marrying their children according to their own sweet will. The women of Mauritius did not enjoy any status. Abhimanu Anant, who has done pioneering work on Dalit women of Mauritius, has very clearly presented her true picture i.e. misery, suffering and socio-economic bondage. In most of the novels of this country Nirmam traces deserted women characters. In Anant's *Andolan* we read the character of two deserted women, Rama and Salma. But in some of the novels, characters are conscious of their rights particularly swastic of *Chun-Chun Chunav*.

In the next sixteen chapters Nirmum has analysed and presented a critical evolution of sixteen popular novels of Mauritius Hindi fiction writers. With the ongoing process of development after attaining independence the change in characters of Mauritius novels is obvious. As the situation in the country became peaceful, people began enjoying freedom, the youth, particularly women, recognised their identity and aspirations, as in works like *Shefali*, *Apni hi Talash*, *Mudia Pahad Bol Utha* etc. The novelists changed the role of their characters from struggle to consciousness, from conflict to inner-line frame of policies, upliftment of illiterate, socio-economic new structure and their identification with modern society. Their thirst for more knowledge, their hunger for more thought and a look for scientific change can easily be seen in these characters. This process of change in the novels of seventies to nineties is quite manifest in Mauritius. The modern Mauritius youth wants to catch up with mainstream of the West as fast as they can. In many of Anant's works Nirmum has traced local traditions and customs. In *Mudia Pahad Bol Utha* the novelist depicts the customs of keeping awake the whole night after a death and also undertaking one time Akhand Ramayan Path, which are similar to

our customs. Some novelists have thrown light on corruption in hospitals, government offices and police stations. Even elections are not cent percent free and fair as shown in *Mudia Pahar Bol Utha*. Casteism plays a pivotal role in marriages and elections. There is no *Sati* burning or *bal vivah* (Child Marriage) in that country. In general it is just kindness which now prevails in new independent Mauritius.

The third book I would like to discuss is *The Vice-Chancellors Remember* edited by M.V. Mathur and Ramesh Arora (Associated Publishing House, New Delhi 1992). In the very first chapter is given the profile, performance and predicaments of vice-chancellors by Ramesh Arora. He has analysed the vice-chancellor's role as an administrator and academician, his relationship with politicians, employees and student union leaders. His ability, tact and firmness is judged in complex situations and in case his grip over politically motivated affairs is there, he is appreciated even by his foes and friends alike as in the case of R.C. Mehrotra, the then VC of Delhi University, P. Jaganmohan Reddy of Osmania University, Manzoor Alam of University of Kashmir whose examples have been illustrated by the author narratively. It is true that most of the VCs suffer agony, are put through painful helplessness situations by politicians, and finally either they are sacked or leave the job voluntarily in the middle of their term.

One of the most important features of a university is Autonomy which has been discussed in Chapter 27 by S.N. Mehrotra Ex-VC of Jodhpur under title "Autonomy and Accountability of Indian Universities". Arora's conception on this topic is "comprehensive autonomy would involve a freedom to a university to manage its affairs through its own well established institutional devices. A respect for such a broader notion of autonomy envisages government's keenness to come to the university's assistance in times of crises with a view to help restore equilibrium amongst its various subsystems. In a democratic system the importance of autonomy has become more vulnerable as it has become a fashion with the politicians and bureaucrats to undermine VC's position". An important question that arises is as to why till now the universities have failed to enjoy adequate autonomy? Mehrotra has very rightly analysed this question in his article "Autonomy and Accountability of In-

dian Universities". He feels politicization of university campus, very often decisions of the law courts, and financial clutches of the state and central governments come in way of autonomy of the universities. In his opinion the financial relationship between the university and the state government is not usually very happy and that creates trouble. He suggests remedies for this and appeals for the creation of State Councils of Higher Education for proper planning, coordination of higher education and free functioning of universities. But there lies the question of financial accountability also. Universities should not be immune from public accountability.

One chapter which has impressed me the most in this book is written by M.V. Mathur, Ex-VC of Rajasthan University entitled "Small Reforms, Big Potential". According to Mathur "A well prepared 5 year perspective plan for the university is desirable. For qualitative improvement of teaching and research services of outstanding academicians are desirable.

*The Vice Chancellors Remember* is a book which cannot be easily forgotten by those who have served the education department as a teacher or administrator. It is an innovative endeavour for sharing of sweet and bitter experiences of most of the mature VC's when their conviction was at test. R.C. Malhotra illustrates in detail the incidents which he faced during his tenure as Vice-Chancellor and tells us how agitated students tried to kick him but he could handle the situation with courage and wit.

The book presents a picture of those VCs who were continuously at war with Chancellors and also of those VCs who like T.K. Tope enjoyed full blessings and goodwill of the Chancellor. When Tope faced an ugly situation in connection with the *Nav Nirmam* agitation in Gujarat which had its repercussions in Bombay, and made history as the first VC of Bombay University who was gheraoed, Chancellor came to his rescue. In Tope's view UGC has miserably failed in its mission of bringing excellence amongst institutions of higher learning. Tope continued to pursue his academic commitments by taking PG classes in law and guided Ph.D students even in the midst of his administrative assignment and social engagements. He celebrated his golden jubilee of teaching on June 24, 1986 with vigour and joy.

In M.S. Gore, VC of Bombay University, we find a true reformer who is out to bring more autonomy to colleges, reforms in the campus by ironing out various problems most of which were born out of the credibility gap in the relations between college administration, teachers and students. Gore developed a habit of working by consultation and consensus which is the need of the university administration all over the country. Gore mentions one or two incidents of bitterness during his tenure as VC which tell us the story of jealousies on campus from which most of the universities suffer but the reformatory approach of Prof. Gore handled the situation smoothly. Gore pleads for restructuring of the present university set-up.

To V.K.R.V. Rao, Vice Chancellorship was momentous. Rao met Pt. Govind Vallabh Pant who was Home Minister and head of the Delhi Administration and said 'Panditji', Sir, just as you have taken an oath of office to maintain the Constitution as a union cabinet minister, in a small way I believe I have also taken an oath of office as VC to uphold the statutes, ordinances and regulations of the university." He convinced him and upheld his conviction of parity of rules for private and government institutions. Rao believed in persuasion rather than dictatorial orders that was the secret of his cordial relations with students, teachers and university employees. During his tenure as VC he arranged some useful lectures by University Professors for improving the knowledge of general public. In that university is seen going to people directly. He was able to bring aesthetics on the campus by creating School of Music, School of Painting and Sculpture in Delhi University. A concert hall was also constructed at his initiative. Rao had a strong liking for Indian languages and it was he who was able to set up units with a reader and a lecturer in Tamil, Telgu, Malayalam, Kannada, Marathi and Gujarati in Delhi University. Rao also took keen interest in sports. He tried his best to honour the best sportsmen of the university.

V.S. Ramaswamy's article entitled "Triumphs and Tragedies" is a narration of successes and failures, joys and sorrows of an able administrator at the top of NITIE and IIM. In Ramaswamy's words, hardly one per cent of principles of Management are observed in IIM. To his surprise his efforts to introduce studies on livestock, drought, animal power, slaughter system evoked no response. The

productivity of management education is still at low pitch.

S. Sampath in his article 'Restoring the reputation' has successfully emphasized how he could bring excellence in IIT, Kanpur and attract the best talent in the institution from all over India. Sampath relates the story of a suicide case, its enquiry and the tact with which he saved the reputation of the institution, creates an interest in reader's emotions who reads the whole episode with anxiety and feels relieved in the end.

There are other worth reading articles like "Big Push to Reforms" by Malcom Adiseshiah, "An Unfinished Journey" by J.N. Kapur, "The Painful Judiciousness" by P. Jaganmohan Reddy, "Serving two pioneering institutions" by Syed Hashim Ali who served Osmania and Aligarh Universities as VC. The article by D.P. Singh "A period of revitalization" is also appreciable. "Daring the Discord" by S.P. Sinha and "Poignancy and amusement" by Iqbal Narain who happens to have experience of

three universities namely Rajasthan University, Banaras Hindu University, and NEHU bear testimony to their contribution to elevating the academic stature of the seats of higher learning. In Narain's view VCs have lot of responsibilities but little real power.

In the article entitled "Agriculture and Culture" by G.B.K. Hooja, who was VC, Agriculture University, Udaipur in 1962 and later joined Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya as VC in Nov, 1975, we find a very strong, bold man of wit in him. His term was full of struggle, agony, anxiety and continuous conflict with intriguers inside and outside the campus. He has enlightened readers by giving minute details of the incidents on the campus.

Some of the articles like "Stop Singing While Your Voice is still Good" by M.V. Pylee, "A Dream Came True But.." by Hari Narain, "An Authentic Concern" by Rais Ahmed, "A Voyage Against Tides" by Manzoor Alam, "Contentions And Contentment" by I J. Patel are equally important and impressive.

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# The Pleasure of Reading

Fr. Nicolau G. Pereira\*

Reading makes man enlightened and keeps him in good company. Cicero had said that, if a man has a library and an orchard, he can find for himself a suitable occupation in his old age. But not only old people can keep themselves busy by reading. Reading is required for professional growth as well as for personal growth. When I say professional, I mean an advocate, a magistrate, an engineer, a teacher and likewise. Personal growth concerns an individual with regard to intellect, emotional feelings, sociability. Whatever may be the profession, an individual has to be concerned with human growth. Reading helps a great deal in attaining this growth.

## One Book or Many Books ?

In former times very few books were printed, and thus one could select the books of one's liking. Someone could, therefore, choose Shakespeare, or Plato or Aristotle for reading. In such a selection there are advantages and disadvantages, which are well expressed in the saying : *timeo hominem unius libri* (I am afraid of a person who reads only one book). A man who reads only one book can assimilate very well all the ideas in that book. He can become a master in that particular field. But there is also fear of narrow-mindedness. A person who has discovered every thing that is written in the book may ignore the good things that are also in other books.

Attachment to a particular author may bring many benefits to the person who reads his book — clarity of expression, revelation of the innermost feelings, maturity of thought, understanding of human problems. Personal style of the author can make a deep impression on the reader. And if this reader becomes himself a writer, his style will mirror the personality of the author who has influenced him. Such a reflection of the personality is also observed in other walks of life. An architect is easily recognized by the design of the buildings. A painter or an artist can be recognized by the lines and shades on the paintings. When they make a school, the influence or inspiration of these architects like

Le Corbusier, or artists like Picasso can easily be detected.

## Different Types of Books

Books that pertain to human growth can be of different types : Human or Social Sciences and Literature. While the books on Human Sciences will be mostly didactic or informative, the books of Literature will re-create human mind with its ideas and feelings, or the circumstances, with action and reaction, in which men live.

The classic literature of the Greeks or the Romans has set some standards for later ages. Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilianus have given expression to these standards, and they have been presented in the course of time in the classes of Rhetoric. They have also often been repeated in different countries by masters like Crevier in France, Hermosilla in Spain or Borges de Figueiredo in Portugal. Same standards found their way to India through the Oxford dons who came down to India as teachers or professors. Long ago in Goa, where we used to follow the educational pattern of continental Europe, in the class of Rhetoric we were taught the Greek and Latin classics of poetry and prose. Perhaps in modern times no student speaks of Valmiki, Homer, Virgil, Cicero. The epics written by some of these had become models for literary masterpieces like *Lusiad* or *Jerusalem Liberated* and others. Similarly we had tragedies of Aeschylus or comedies of Aristophanes or dramas of Euripides. In the colonial period of India, in Goa we were familiar with literature set on these models like the works of Gil Vicente or Almeida Garret, and in the rest of India works of Shakespeare, Milton and others. In a way, we have to remember that literature has no boundaries. It is part of the cultural heritage of mankind. In order to enjoy the masterpieces of literature, old or new, there has to be access to the language in which they were written, or a good translation has to be made available. The old classic literature has still sway on many readers who still like to read them, as they give a good insight into human feelings or personality.

## Literature in Modern Times

Human output of literature is ever on the

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increase. Writing is done in different languages, being thus a little difficult to keep the track of all good writers. But critical reviews in various periodicals as well as the Nobel Prize awarding committee are very helpful for the readers to go for the books of outstanding writers. Translation of great masterpieces are also easily available. Recently, when I was in Portugal, I was pleased to see that a good number of works of Rabindranath Tagore were available in Portuguese translation. The universality of thought of Tagore makes his books very attractive. The Catholic Church has incorporated many of his poems in the church hymnal to be sung during religious services. Rabindranath Tagore is perhaps one of the few Indian poets to be appreciated abroad as much as in India. Personally, I enjoy reading Gitanjali often. W.B. Yeats writing an introduction to it states: "A whole people, a whole civilization, immeasurably strange to us, seems to have taken up into his imagination, and yet we are not moved because of its strangeness, but because we have met our own image, as though we had walked in Rosseti's willow wood, or heard, perhaps, for the first time in literature, our voice as in a dream."

Generally all good poetry gives the reader the sensation that he is participating in the feelings of others, or others are participating in his feelings. Kahlil Gibran, Walt Whitman are well known in the English-speaking world. But there are equally good poets in other languages. In Portuguese literature, the philosophical sonnets of Antero de Quental or even Barbosa du Bocage and the modern poets like Antonio Gedeao, Florbela Espanca are quite pleasant to read. Goa has also its own poets in Portuguese language, like Adeodato Barreto, Nascimento Mendonsa, Paulino Dias and others. Here is a poem of A. Barreto translated by B. D'Sa:

#### *Says the Lord*

*Oh! do not seek the traces of my feet  
on the floor of the sanctuary!  
Can the pale light of a lamp  
that burns in a stand  
symbolize the Fire that sets  
the space aflame?  
Can perhaps the cold gold  
of a tabernacle  
give you warmth  
and contain Life?  
Life?*

*I am the Life I  
I am the Truth and Love!  
I glitter in the desolate tear  
that gathers in the eyes of a widow  
and rolls to the ground!  
I smile in the bread  
that you give as alms;  
I live in the hand that caresses  
and in the womb that begets...*

*.....  
Why do you seek me far into the space, my son  
when I live within reach of your arms?*

Is not this poetry resembling Tagorean poetry? I do not quote here Nascimento Mendonsa nor Paulino Dias not to be too long. There are nowadays good anthologies in many languages displaying the literary jewels.

#### Other Genres of Literature

I have so far referred only to poetry. But there are also other genres of literature to be appreciated. The novels and romances or simple narratives also attract many readers. One novel in Portuguese that I have often read is the *Eurico, o Presbitero* of Alexandre Herculano, an outstanding Portuguese writer. The theme is a catholic priest of the times when the Iberian peninsula was under the moors. The catholic priest, because of his particular state of life, what we call *brahmachari* in Indian language, has been in the West object of many novels, which have been even converted into movies. In the above novel, Herculano shows how a priest is faithful to his vows. The personage of the novel is Eurico who in his younger days had a girl-friend. During the moorish wars, they lost contact with each other, until Eurico decides to become a priest. One good day while celebrating the mass, he sees his girl-friend Hemengarda among the girls who had sought the protection of the nuns in a monastery. The author expresses beautifully the pathos of this separation that the priesthood enjoins on him, with the sublimation of love that is something divine.

Many might have seen the movie *Dom Camilo*, based on the book written by George Bermanos. The novel is about a priest who wants to regenerate his parish. His moments of frustration, disappointments are depicted in soul-stirring dialogues. Biographies of great men or personalities like Madame Curie, Kennedy etc or science fiction of Jules Verne

or H.G. Wells or popularisation of science by authors like Asimov also make very attractive reading. Besides these literary genres that may reveal creative or artistic mind, there are other books, they may be called philosophical, which give insight into human attitudes, human thinking and feeling.

Will Durant describes the effort of the great minds of Humanity to discover the real Self in his *The Story of Philosophy*. Not only Sigmund Freud, whose impact on those who wish to explain human behaviour is very visible, but also a good number of philosophers have tried to explore the real meaning of human existence. Though I am not a teacher of Philosophy, but because Philosophy, mostly the Epistemology, has an intimate connection with Science, I did spend some time in reading philosophical essays of Albert Einstein, A.N. Whitehead, Teilhard De Chardin and others. Regarding this link of Philosophy with Science, Descartes had once remarked: Thus the whole philosophy is like a tree: the roots are metaphysics, and the branches that issue from the trunk are all other sciences (Vid. William Barret, *Philosophy of the twentieth century*, Vol. III, p. 207).

If there are scientist-thinkers, there are also existential thinkers and writers. Gabriel Marcel, Sartre, Camus, Bergson and other existentialist philosophers are now often quoted by writers indicating thereby their influence on modern thought and writing. Phenomenology and existentialism have seen much excitement and aroused much popular curiosity. This is due to the fact that existentialism claims to study man in his actual conditions. There is no prefabricated man; man makes himself what he is out of the conditions into which he is thrown. Thus existentialism has become a basic movement among modern thinkers, and has influenced much of the writing of the present generation.

Human thought has flown in the course of time as a current and as a counter-current. As William Barret points out in his *Philosophy of the twentieth century*, Vol III, "this slow, unfolding development of modern philosophy is like a great symphony which Descartes opens with the leading theme, andante; other philosophers enrich with variations and counter-themes, allegro; and Kierkegaard and Nietzsche bring to a furious and boiling presto. It might be tempting to hope that the existential philosophers of the twentieth century have at last

brought us to a grand finale; but unlike a symphony, the process of human thought admits no finale so long as man continues to be man, a being perpetually open to the future." And indeed no finale will ever be attained. Those who have read the books of Teilhard De Chardin and others will easily agree with the statement of William Barret. The existential philosophers have found a continuation in scientists who write what can be called hyper-physics or hyper-biology or hyper-anthropology. Teilhard De Chardin is one of the great representatives of this hyper-science, which finds its projection in his book *The future of man* and in its complementary *The Phenomenon of Man*. De Chardin invented the word *noosphere* to indicate the convergence of mankind into itself at much higher level.

Man is conscious today that he can foresee, he has freedom of choice, ability to plan and to construct. From this consciousness will emerge the noosphere by the process of reflexion, inflexion and circumflexion. "The human conglomerate", continues De Chardin, "which the sociologists needed for the furtherance of their speculations and formulations now appears scientifically defined, manifesting itself in its proper time and space, like an object entirely and yet awaited in the sky of life." (*The Future of Man*, p. 160).

The ultra-humanity, a new term coined by De Chardin, is "a realm in which we shall not be able to survive, or superlive, except by developing and embracing on earth, to the utmost extent, all the powers of common vision and unanimisation that are available to us." (p. 280) It appears that such unanimisation is slowly starting with the formation of various types of communities of nations that we see around us.

### Critical Mind

If we wish to cast our eyes over the long cultural pilgrimage of mankind, one book or one author, however illustrious, will not be sufficient. The world is a stage where different personalities show up, but the appreciation depends on our own originaive powers. Man exists by instinct, but progresses by intelligence, says Bergson. For reading to be profitable, we have to use our critical mind. Ideas should be merely points which have to be critically analyzed and selected.

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# Evaluation of Literature Through Indian Epistemology

Man Mohan Lal\*

Literature, unlike other arts, is psycholinguistic by nature : It involves the properties of language, synthesis of emotions and assimilation of experience at the same time. With the advent of European psychological theories, literary criticism round the world underwent a great change. Hypothetical conceptions were empirically judged and some scientific conclusions were deduced therefrom. But the temper of Literature was too subtle to be analysed with scientific exactitude. As such, the philosophical tools, the validity of which is still uncertain persisted in the field of literary criticism. In such a situation adding a new philosophical theory to the great corpus of literary ideologies, would be far from simplifying the issues. What is needed is to fish out the most efficient tools from the existing plethora of philosophy.

If we regard all literature as communication of experience, we can safely apply the epistemological theories of Indian philosophy to literature as they are most exhaustive as well as psychological in their approach. Indian psycho-philosophical systems are based on the deepest experiences, and as such, encompass some universal truths about human mind and its functions. The levels of experience and cognitive domains that have been elaborated in the systems of *samkhya* and *Yoga* are widely and effectively applicable to literary experiences.

Literary creation is as instinctive to human nature as literary enjoyment that transports the mind of the reader to an artistically simulated microcosm. The philosophical theories formulated by Indian schools of thought regarding the evolution of the universe are common to the creation of literature. There is an identical uniformity between the macrocosm of the universe and the microcosm of literature. Besides, Indian epistemology believes in the theory of instinctive memory that transcends the horizons of death. *Abhinives* refers back to the previous births and therefore all fear that lives undercurrent in human behaviour gives birth to *jijivisa* i.e.

longing for life. The act of literary creation as well as the act of enjoying it finds its root along the intensity of *jijivisa*.

The dichotomy of *Abhinivesa* and *Jijivisa* is combined by the instinct of *ananda* that finds its expression in various degrees. All Indian aesthetics depend on this single stimulus of human psychology. The theory of *rasa* and its communication in literature emanates from the seminal conviction of absolute pleasure. Literary evaluation requires both — epistemology and aesthetics : one is inadequate in want of the other. This theory has a synthesis of both so that the most complex experiences may be analysed in literary evaluation.

## Genetics of Literature

Creation of literature wears the semblance of creation of life. The same instinct lies behind both—the instinct of multiplicity. *Ekoaham bahusyam*; I am one I want to be many. On the macrocosmic scale it is Brahma who desires so and brings forth the variety of creation in the universe. Some thing similar a creature wants to do instinctively. This instinct gets expanded infinitely in man. Although he may not be as free and capable as God in creating life and living things, his imagination assumes marvellous dimensions and as such, reaches the place from where he can create mentally his own universe identical to the real one. He multiplies himself into many characters. He becomes an Othello and Iago at the same time. A Lady Macbeth comes out of a playwright's own flesh. All settings of life, the seas, the mountains, the rivers and the forests — lie in his person. He is the *Virat Purusa* of his universe.

According to the *Vedas* all creation is the imagination of Brahma. Every round of creation is called a *Kalpa* i.e. an idea. God creates this world with the help of these powers *Dravyasakti* (Matter), *Jnana-sakti* (Ken), and *Kriyasakti* (Action). The fourth factor is *Kala* (time) which is God's own manifestation, and which has all attributes that are supposed to be possessed by Him. All these factors remain present in creation of a simulated world of literature. Matter, Ken and Action may be similar to those of the real world and seem to be borrowed from real

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situations, they are never imitations or reflections. Creation is a cyclic process and therefore takes place repeatedly : the basic structure remains the same, but always with a variety that keeps it from being stale. We can explain it in terms of human anatomy. Every human body has the same skeleton, the same structure, the same organs but it is the individuality that gives it a personality altogether different from anybody else. Similarly the same laws apply to the creation of any piece of literature but the setting, the sizzling life and characters have their unique individuality.

The world of literary imagination is no truer than the real world we live in. The Vedantic theory of dreams is applicable to both. Dreams are the creation of mind. The world of dreams is the expansion of our own "self" : all the persons and things we see in dreams are made of our individuality. Even if they are imitations of the real-life characters, they bear the subjective mark of the dreamer himself. They speak and act according to the hopes and fears of the dreamer. Their transformation symbolises his dormant complexes. One may not agree to the Vedantic metaphor of dreams for the real world, one will surely fall in with the *Upanishadic* theory of four states of the mind — *Jagrata* (conscious), *Swapna* (dream), *Susupti* (Deep sleep or unconscious), and *Turiya* (the fourth or transcendental). *Jagrata* has two substates — *Vyavahara* (conscious behaviour) and *Sankalpa* (conscious imagination). These states of the mind can be rearranged in the order of convenience — *Susupti*, *Jagrata Vyavahara*, *Jagrata Sankalpa*, *Swapna*, and *Turiya*. According to this theory conscious state of imagination (*Jagrata Sankalpa*) and the dream state (*Swapna*) have equal intensity of imagination. The only difference between the two is that the former is creative and the reason has full control over the flights of imagination; simulation of action is voluntary. In this state the hypothalamus of human brains, which is the repository of emotions and sentiments remains fully active. Simultaneously the cerebral functions like recollection, selection etc. remain functioning properly. On the other hand in the dream state these functions assume passivity, and the mind remains floating involuntarily from one piece of imagination to another. In the state of *Jagrata Sankalpa* the mind is capable of simulating any state as well as any level of experience. Besides, the Vedantic epistemology has contributed a very elaborate explanation as to the intensity of human experience.

Enjoyment of poetry depends more on episte-

mological process than on aesthetic response. We can account for and measure the intensity of joy in terms of Vedantic epistemology. Upanishadic literature has given us very deep analysis of the human mind. There are three parallel levels of human existence — *Sthula*, *Suksma* and *Karana*. They are further subdivided into five *Kosas* — *annamaya*, *pranamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijnanamaya*, *anandamaya*. The *Suksma* or subtle body consists of *pranamaya kosa*, *manomaya kosa* and *jnanamaya kosa* which together constitute the *antahkarana*. The *antahkarana* has four parts — *manas*, *ahankara*, *buddhi* and *citta*. Any experience of life passes through the different levels and states of our mind. With the help of the epistemological theories of Upanishads I have prepared a cross diagram of human experience (see Table. 1) which can be used as a tool of evaluation in literary criticism. It has a mathematical accuracy with a high percentage validity.

Let us apply the 5 x 5 point scale to Frank O'Hara's poem 'Morning' (See Appendix). It may be noticed that the poem is without stops and commas: the poet seems to show his impatience of expression. The verbs of simple present denote the frequent feeling he has in the mornings. However, he refers to the specific past through the lines "Last night the stars were numerous" "Where did you eat your lunch", "Were there lots of anchovies". On the scale the poem begins at the cross section of *Vijnanamaya Kosa*, the Intellectual Domain and *Jagrata Sankalpa* (The Conscious Imaginative State). In other words at the outset the poet's mind is in the state of "active cerebral functions" which has constant  $100 \times 4$  (400) intensity value of imagination. Through this state which always serves as a window to the past, the poet's mind slips into the area of the Psycho-synthetic Domain crossed by the horizontal line of the conscious Imaginative state. Thus the poem reaches additional intensity value of 10 to  $100 \times 3$  (30-300). The poet's feelings and responses spurt from *Citta*, the repository of emotions and experiences; hence the whole poem is *Citta-based*.

The Vedantic epistemology may be helpful in elaborating the *rasa* theory to the accuracy of literary evaluation. I have elaborated the *Srngara rasa* (*Rati*) (See Table 2) according to the *guna* theory i.e. the trio of *sattwa*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which is further vertically divided into three stages — beginning, middle and end. If we study the above poem of O'Hara, we shall discern the poet's mood of *Viyoga Srngara* (Love deserted).

Apparently the poem describes his feeling of

separation but no where does the poet become passionate or malign in his recollections. There is wonderful simplicity in his sorrow. The feeling of loss is quite benign and hence *Sattwika*. The poem begins at the simple assertion of his love —

*I've got to tell you  
how I love you always*

The poet expresses his benign feeling of separation —

*I miss you always  
when I go to the beach  
the sand is wet with  
tears that seem mine*

By and by he switches to his *asanka* (apprehension). He is depressed to guess where his beloved may be —

*what are you doing now  
where did you eat your  
lunch and were there  
lots of anchovies it  
is difficult to think  
of you without me in  
the sentence you depress  
me when you are alone*

The poet's anxiety dominates throughout. He is worried about his beloved all the time. At the same time the poem has a parallel undercurrent of *atmarati*. He cannot think of his love without his 'self': "it / is difficult to think / of you without me". The first person is frequent as well as quite eloquent. His egotism, if not dominant, goes along with his love for the beloved. The subjective expressions are over frequent "I've got to tell you", "I love you always", "I need you", "I miss you always", "I never weep", etc. This subjectivity has produced a typical mood of self-pity which is evident from small clauses like — "I am lovely / thinking of flutes" and "I beg you do not go".

In this poem we can easily observe the expansion of self love into the conjugal love. The poet's *kantyarati* (conjugal love), besides *atmarati*, consists of *mamatwa*, *vatsalya*, *sakhya* and *dasya* (See Appendix - 1) at the same time. The element of *mamatwa* is evident from the phrases like "my mouth", "tears that seem mine", "my heart", "my keys" and so on. There is a sort of restlessness in his love which resembles more that for a mother than for a mistress. See how impatient he is! "the maroon robe / chills me I need you", "if there is a place/further from me / I beg you do not go." Here the wistfulness of the poet reminds us the three samples of classic impatience enumerated in the *Bhagawatam*—

*Ajatapaksa iva mataram khagah stanyam yatha  
vatsatara ksudharta*

*Priyam priyeva vyusitam visanna manoarvindaksa  
didrksate twam.*

(Just as the unfeathered young birds and the hungry calves crave for their mothers, and a woman lover pines for the company of her emigrated lover, my heart, o lotus eyed, aspires to see you.)

There is a beautiful blending of *sakhya* and *dasya* in the

*I miss you always  
when I go to the beach*

... ..  
*the parking lot is  
crowded and I stand  
rattling my keys the car  
is empty as a bicycle*

we can infer both types of behaviour from these lines — the lover may be regarded as behaving like a friend or a chauffeur.

### Experiential Chronometry

Matter, ken and action cannot be effective without the time (*kala*) factor. Every piece of literature has a subtle dimension of time—explicit or implicit. The explicit *kala* is manifested in the straight forward reference to the time of experience. When *kala* is implicit it may be inferred from the sequential order of events and experiences or from maturity of ideas. There is one more classification of *kala* from the Vedantic viewpoint — 1. *Mahakala* 2. *Dikkala* 3. *Sawakala* (Universal time, local time and individual time). Literature is not so much concerned with the universal and local time as with the individual time. The individual time is experiential. In the *Bhagwatam* a *gopi* pines for a vision of Krsna at dusk and says

*Trutir yugayate twam apasyatam.*

(One moment assumes the length of a *yuga* without seeing you.)

As such exaggeration in the time expressions in literature may be accounted for by this principle. Expansion or contraction of time depends on the mental condition of the writer. Besides, he can expand or contract the process of time deliberately also. As the individual time is sequential, it is measured either in terms of events or through association of experiences. Thus if all literature is the record of human experience, it will automatically incorporate the time factor in all expressions invariably. Let us take Ben Howard's poem "Winter Re-

There is a keen awareness of time in this poem. It refers to all the three forms of time — *mahakala*, *dikkala* and *swakala*. We can easily pick up the phrases that allude explicitly to time. The phrase "several billion years of age" refers to *mahakala*, the universal time vis-a-vis which is the phrase of *dikkala*, the local time that measures time in hours, days, months and years, "I am thirty", "Last year's grass", "the residue of thought" and so on. But the last two lines specifically exemplify the *swakala* i.e. the individual time. Here "a moment ago" is vague and meaningless from the viewpoint of the universal and local forms of time. This chronometric feeling is purely individual and therefore infinitely flexible. Time seems to cease in the description

The underlying impatience of the poet retards the speed of time while in the last lines the time gathers wonderful speed.

These analyses endeavour to provide an alternative methodology of literary appreciation. I accept, however, the theory needs to be further worked out so as to establish its validity in the field of literary criticism. I would like to request my senior colleagues to encourage research scholars to pursue this approach as deeply as possible. Thus they would, I am sure, help the Indian students of literature enjoy English as well as American literature from a purely Indian point of view.

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## THE 5 x 5 POINT SCALE OF HUMAN EXPERIENCE\*

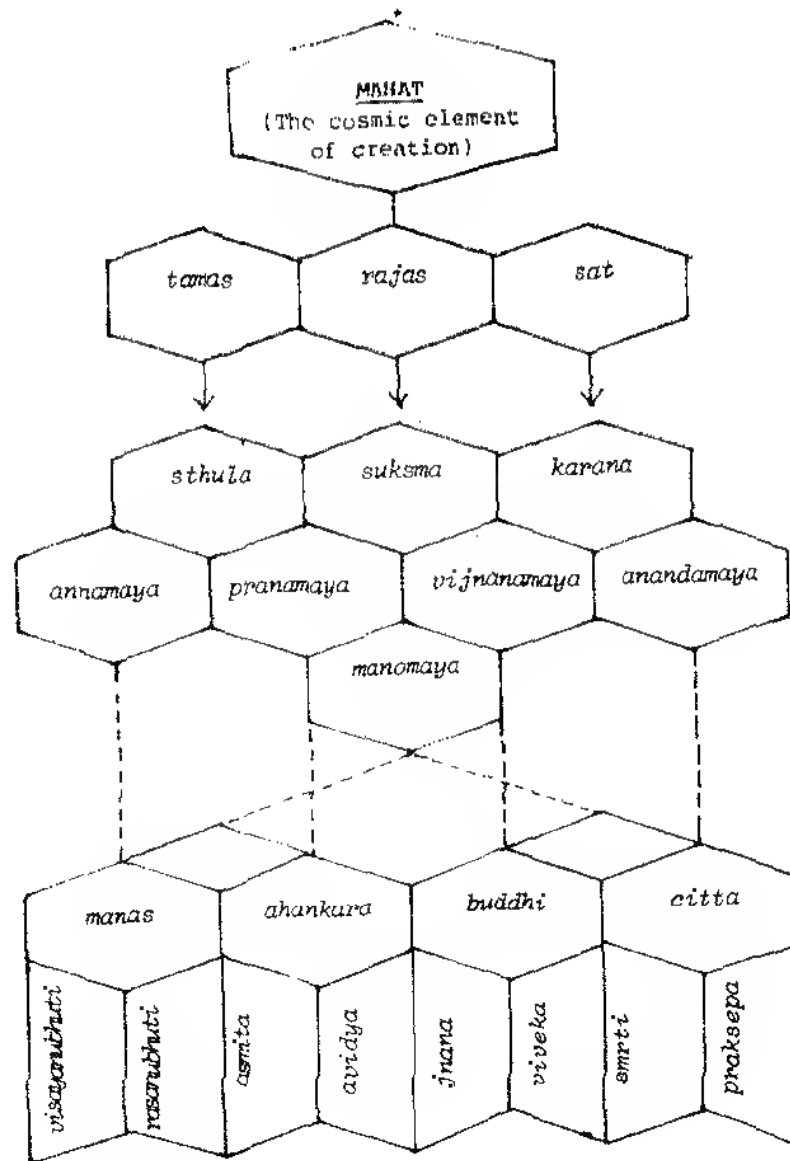
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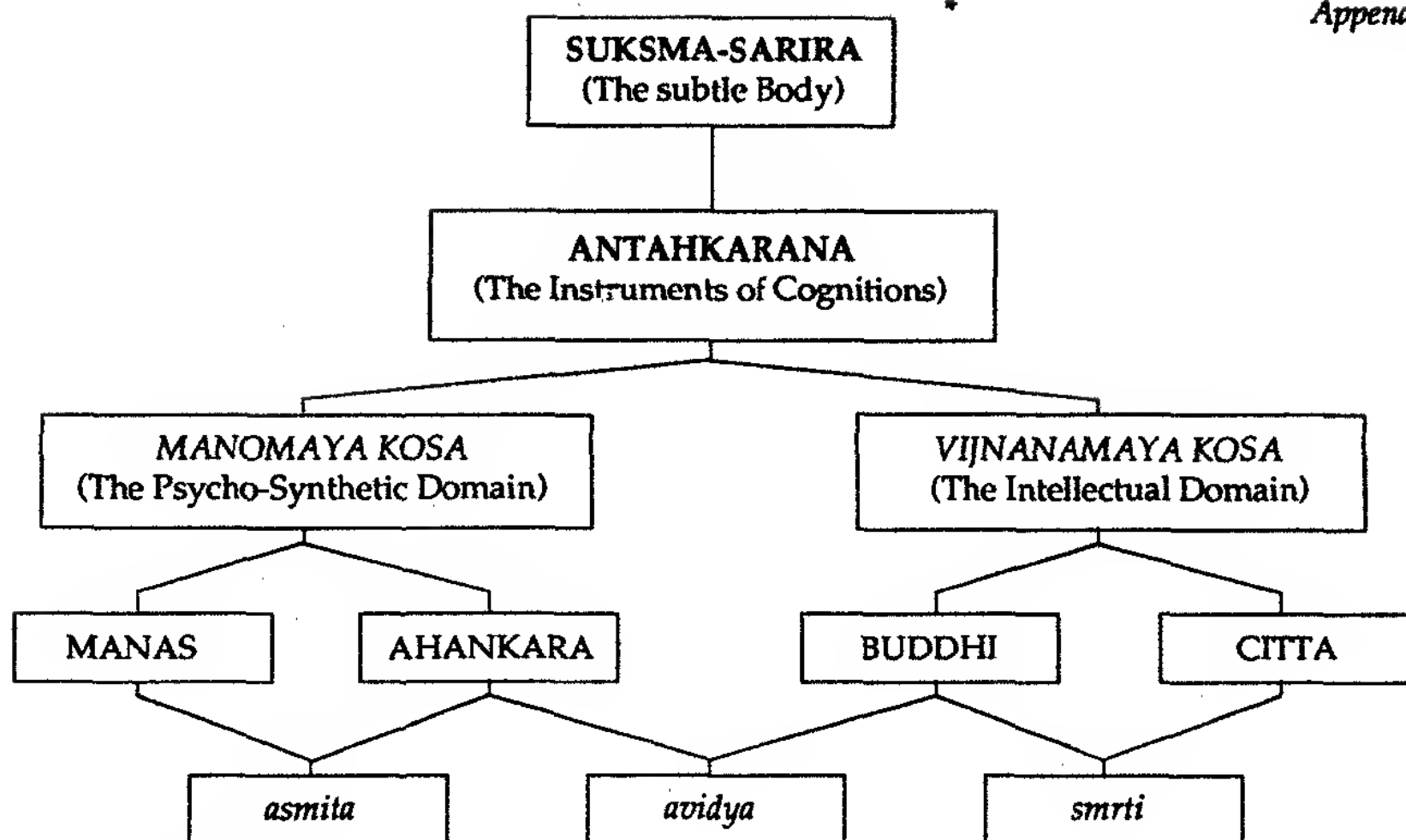


RATI/SRNGARA (Love)					
SAMYOGA SRNGARA (Love Immediate)			VIYOGA SRNGARA (Love Deserted)		
<i>sattwika</i> (benign)	<i>rajasa</i> (passionate)	<i>tamas</i> (malign)	<i>sattwika</i> (benign)	<i>rajasa</i> (passionate)	<i>tamasa</i> (malign)
<i>sankoca</i> (hesitation and persuasion)	<i>mana</i> (arrogance and compulsion)	<i>kathinya</i> (rigidity and coercion)	<i>asanka</i> (apprehen sion)	<i>sandeha</i> (suspicion)	<i>krodha</i> (anger)
<i>samarpana</i> (submission)	<i>uddama vasana</i> (uninhibited)	<i>uddhata vasana</i> (stormy passion)	<i>cinta</i> (anxiety) passion)	<i>irsya</i> (jealousy)	<i>durukti</i> (vituperation)
<i>trpti</i> (contentment)	<i>harsa</i> (jubilation)	<i>nairasya</i> (depression)	<i>swa-daya</i> (self-pity) and discouragement	<i>hatasa</i> (dejection)	<i>pratisodha bhava</i> (feeling of revenge)

\* Source : Lal 1993:43

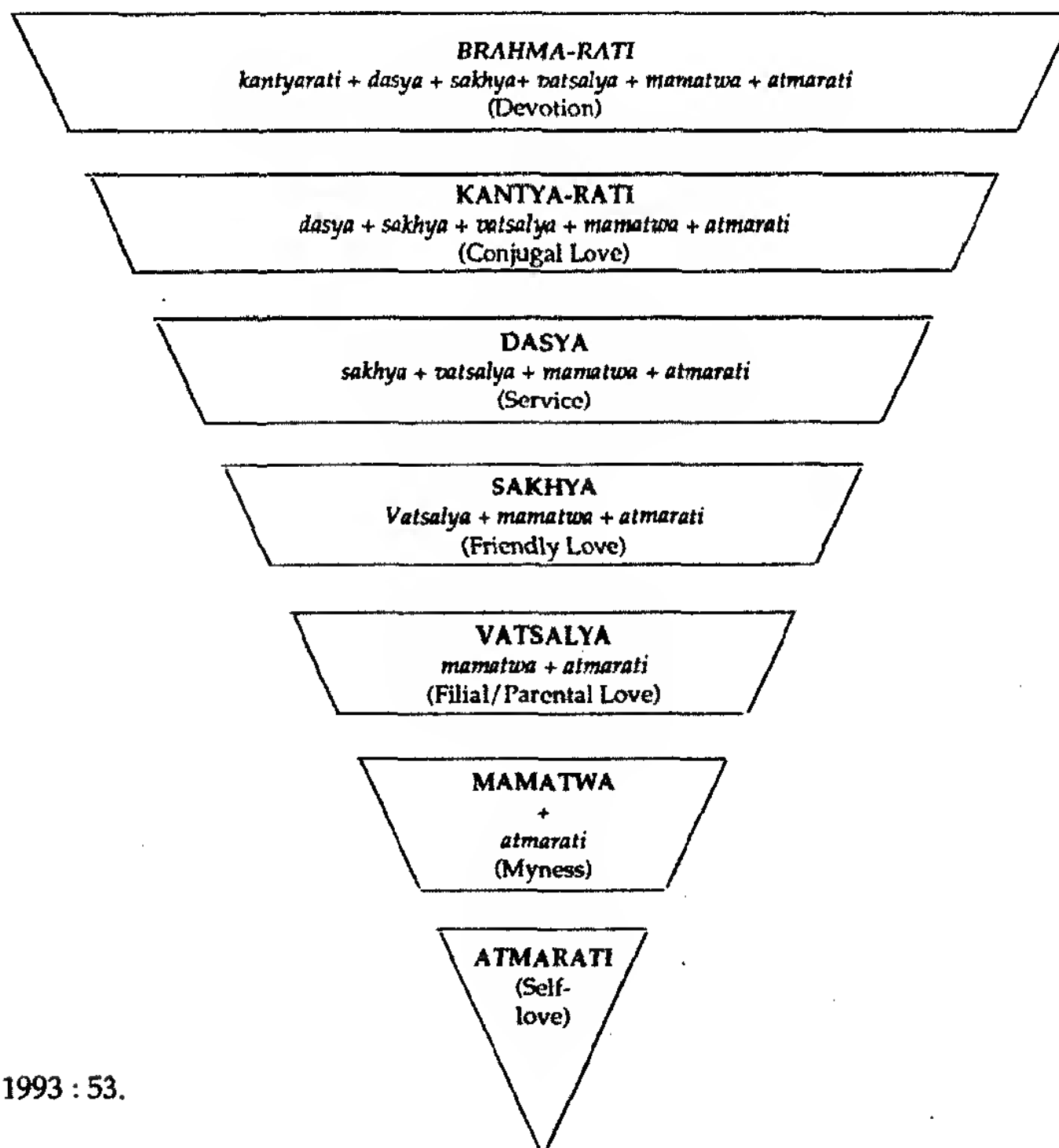


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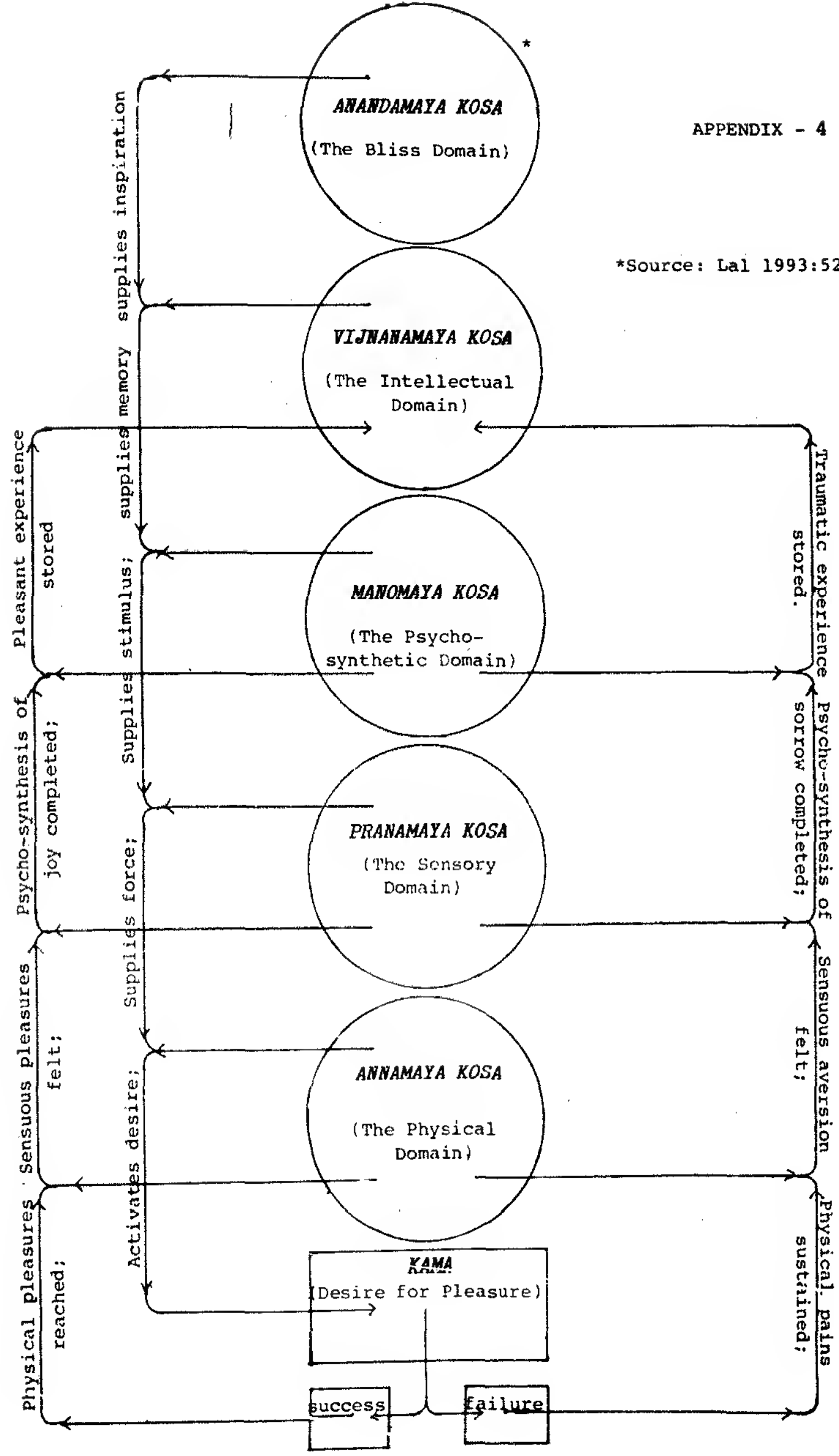
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## Science Congress Meet at Jaipur A Report

The 81st Session of the Indian Science Congress was held at the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur on 3-8 January 1994. Inaugurating the Session, the Prime Minister, Mr P.V. Narasimha Rao, expressed fears that in the liberalised post-GATT scenario, crucial technologies may be withheld from India to stunt her progress in various fields. This was in spite of the fact that the new GATT deal ensures further opening up of national economies and erosion of national borders as a consequence of internationalisation of business, innovation and technological development, he said. "Yet, I foresee emergence of such trends and building of protectionist walls, said the Prime Minister but added, "However, I have full faith in the genius of Indian economists, scientists and technologists and the people to get around such problems."

In his speech, devoted mainly to stress the importance of technology in the post-GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) world environment, Mr Rao said that though the new global agreement on ensuring free trade would affect many fields, its impact would be high only in some key areas.

Identifying these areas as textiles and clothing, agriculture, trade related intellectual property rights (TRIPs) and services, including research and development services, he said such sectors required a strong base in indigenous R and D and science and technological capabilities.

"With our vast reservoir of S and T personnel and comparatively lower manpower costs, it was possible to meet such challenges through appropriate R and D inputs. To make this happen, industry has to play a dominant part", Mr Rao stressed, referring to the successful examples of industrialised nations.

However, private industry contributed less than 15 per cent of national R and D investments. This should change, said the Prime Minister, and industry should come forward to define the goal areas and set targets for the scientific community.

While creation of wealth was important, it was even more crucial to ensure its equitable distribution, said Mr Rao. He attributed increasing social tensions to the perpetuation inequity in economic development. Quoting a Sanskrit verse, he said prosperity for all should be the purpose of our developmental programmes.

Referring to the theme of the session, "Science in India : excellence and accountability," he said he shall not judge the performance of scientists in terms of conventional yardsticks that are used to assess productivity. It will be left to scientists' own methods of judgement.

At the same time, there can be no judgement according to which concrete results were ignored. He quoted noted scientist Prof S. Chandrasekhar to stress this point : "One's place in science, as posterity will duly as-

sign, depends largely on one's continuous exertion, at the edge of one's ability.

Deftly side-stepping issues of declining government investment in the R and D sector and allocations for the educational institutions voiced by the scientific community, the Prime Minister said industry should step up investments in universities too and also ensure involvement of high quality manpower in programmes of their interest.

Prof P.N. Srivastava, in his presidential speech, regretted "complete neglect of the education of science" and doubted India's competence to compete with other countries.

He asked the science administrators and policy-makers to ponder as to how the expectations and aspirations of the people were going to be achieved if science education continued to be neglected.

Quoting recommendations of senior scientists made to the government in 1990, Prof Srivastava regretted that programmes to provide excellence in science education by establishing consortia of universities to work in collaboration with higher institutions of learning and utilising their superior human and material resources were not initiated.

He suggested at least ten per cent of the science and technology budget should be embarked for training of manpower in universities and colleges. The scientific activities of the UGC should be supported by various concerned agencies and the departments of science and technology.

Proper improvement will have to be made in primary and secondary schools as well. "If we do not do this, we will only be strengthening the tip of the pyramid, whose bottom is weak. In such a situation, we will never be able to compete with the world in the 21st century," Prof Srivastava cautioned.

He lauded the role of agricultural scientists, due to the efforts of whom a "green revolution" was possible at a time when a famine was anticipated by the Western world. "India is better prepared to face droughts now," he said.

On the scientific achievements in India, Prof. Srivastava listed the following:

— On atomic energy, capabilities spanning the entire nuclear cycle — exploration, mining, extraction, purification and conversion of nuclear materials, processing of spent fuel — had been achieved.

— The space research programme had made a tremendous success with the successful launching of many communication and multipurpose satellites. Despite the failure of the PSLV in September 1993, there was no need for despondency.

— On the health front, the infant mortality rate has come down to 95 per thousand from 140 per thousand, while longevity has increased from 32 years to 60. Population growth, too, is showing a decline.

— In the electronics and communications field, notable developments had occurred.

— In the fields of oil, natural gas and petrochemicals, impressive growth had been achieved, especially with regards to pipe-

line facilities, manufacture of offshore rigs and platforms and underwater technologies, etc.

But Prof. Srivastava warned against complacency and said the per hectare rice production in China was much higher than that in India, at 5,712 kg as compared to India's 2,624 kg.

"While it was true that scientists have not failed the country, we just cannot yet satisfy the nation by repeated assertions on what science has done," he said adding "there has been naive enthusiasm for doing what every man is doing in the West, without having goal-directed activities, especially needed for the country.

India's indigenous cryogenic rocket engine programme had made some progress but it would have been better if the Indian scientists had embarked on this endeavour a few years earlier, he said.

Commenting on the deficiencies, Prof. Srivastava said "there has been a serious lacuna that a truly critical and unbiased assessment of our track record has never been made, be it of national laboratories, including those for atomic energy, space research or those at universities, etc". Many meaningful recommendations had been scuttled on one pretext or the other, he claimed.

"It has been truly pointed out that we have very few peaks of excellence both in terms of men and institutions. This is not only due to insufficiency of funds and facilities, but also partly because of the depressing atmosphere the scientists have created for themselves. We easily compromise with mediocrity", he said.

The chief minister, Mr Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, asked the

scientists to suggest ways to solve the problem of drinking water in Rajasthan. The governor, Mr Baliram Bhagat, also said Rajasthan was rain deficient state having two major rivers — Chambal and Mahi. Scientists should help the policy makers in overcoming water shortage in the state. The Union minister of state for science and technology, Mr Bhuwanesh Chaturvedi, and the Rajasthan minister for science and technology, Mr Lalit Kishore Chaturvedi, also spoke on the occasion.

On this occasion, the Prime Minister honoured nine Indian scientists for outstanding work in science and technology.

Dr A.S. Paintal of Delhi was presented the Asutosh Mookherjee Memorial Award for his work in medical research.

Dr M.S. Narasimham, who is associated with the International Centre for Theoretical Physics, Italy, was presented the C.V. Raman birth centenary award for his research in mathematics.

The Srinivasa Ramanujan birth centenary award was bagged by Prof R.P. Bambah of Panjab University in mathematics.

Other recipients included Dr Hari Narain, who bagged the M.N. Shah birth centenary award in earth science and Prof P.V. Sukhatme who got the P.C. Mahalanobis birth centenary award.

While Prof A.K. Sharma received the J.C. Bose award for 1993-94 in cytogenetics and cell biology, the P.C. Ray award for 1993-94 was given to Prof C.N.R. Rao in the field of solid state chemistry.

Dr K.C. Binsal and Dr S.L. Kothari, jointly shared the Prof

Hiran Lal Chakravarty award in the field of Botany.

After the awards presentation, the Union minister of state for science and technology, Mr B. Chaturvedi, released a book on "Science in India, Excellence and Accountability". Mr Bhagat also released a book titled "Indian Science, A Selected Bibliography". Prof U.R. Rao, director of the Bangalore-based, ISRO, was elected president of the 82nd session of the Indian Science Congress.

Speaking on the focal theme of the Indian Science Congress, 'Excellence and Accountability', Prof M.G.K. Menon, eminent scientist and former minister of state for science and technology said, "lack of motivation, scant respect for scholarship and a growing tendency to contend with mediocrity are some of the major reasons for the failure of Indian scientists, in the post-Independence period, to match with the best in the world". He said the first half of the 20th century — when scientists like P.C. Ray, J.C. Bose and Megnad Saha (to name a few) strode the Indian scene — was the renaissance period for Indian science.

"This was because they were fired by the spirit of the time and the all-pervading spirit of the time was one which was associated with the freedom struggle," he said, adding that "the air then induced people to strive for greatness" with a certain degree of selflessness.

The situation had changed now, with the driving force now being money and power. Everybody was more interested in cushy jobs, promotions and a better pay packet.

Prof. Menon, however, said it

would be unfair for anybody to expect that science would work and function in isolation of the major trends of the day. "Do we any more have great leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Tilak and Gokhale?" he asked. He said even the science in the West had progressed in an atmosphere of liberalisation and when people began to question the all-pervading authority of the church.

In contrast, leaders in India were again taking us back to religious themes and were instrumental more in dividing the people of the country than acting as agents of cohesion, he said.

But the eminent scientist defended the scientific community in so far as economic accountability was concerned and said the Indian scientists had not committed any securities scam thus far and there had never been a need to appoint a joint parliamentary committee to look into their conduct. At the same time, he pointed, one must admit that science too was a part of the society.

Ruing the fact that the tradition of respect for scholarship and also the *guru-shishya parampara* had all but evaporated from the national scene, Prof Menon said it would be improper to talk of excellence and accountability sitting in an ivory tower.

While stating that failure of education in the country was the main cause for science not taking off in a big way in the country, the former Union minister said university teachers and scientists should also introspect whether they had served society and the country and whether they could do much more and how.

Well-known scientist Dr P.M. Bhargava, the former director of the Centre for Cellular and Mo-

lecular Biology of Hyderabad, lamented the fact that mediocrity at top levels was the main cause why most scientific institutions were packed with mediocre manpower. He also said that the system of promotions, appointments and selections in the Indian scientific world was nothing short of a "scam".

He said that the world of Indian science was full of instances where the rightful candidate was not given his due, and was not selected only because he took a stand on whatever he thought was right. Dr. Bhargava said that objectivity was the first casualty in such instances.

"How many cases have there been of false claims, of irregularities in laboratories and of a budding scientist being frustrated in our country?" he asked. Stating that funds was repeatedly mentioned as one of the major constraints for Indian science, Dr. Bhargava said that his experience is contrary to the popular belief.

He pointed out that there was no shortage of funds for the right kind of projects and proposals, and cited instances of laboratories and programmes which were getting adequate funding, and progressing with their work without feeling any sort of cash crunch. The only difference now is that the funding agency — which in most cases is the government — now asks questions about why money was required, and how it would be spent.

The government also wants to know as to when — if at all — the state is likely to get the return for its investment. Is it unfair on the part of the government, or any other funding agency, to make such inquiries. The problem is that most of those seeking assistance are unable to provide a

convincing answer to such posers, and thus fail to get funding and then crib.

Dr. A.S. Paintal former Director General of ICMR speaking on the focal theme suggested that clinical trials being done on women for a birth control vaccine by ICMR be either terminated or suspended since it has side-effects.

Dr Paintal said lack of ethics in medical research raises the question as to who should be held accountable for undesirable side-effects of a drug or a formulation — the investigator, the agency that approved the trial or the Ethics Committee members who approved the trials?

He said the trials on the controversial anti-fertility vaccine were being carried out in India because the U.S. Government had denied approval in that country through denial of financial support. "The ICMR must lay down strict guidelines for clinical trials of vaccines. It must be stated clearly that if antibodies produced by a vaccine cross react with normally produced hormones, it must not be pursued further. Long-term side-effects of such a vaccine could not be ruled out, even though short-term effects were not visible."

Dr. Paintal disclosed that as member of the ICMR Ethical Committee to approve clinical trials of new drugs and formulations, pressure was brought on him by makers of a drug even after the formulation showed side-effects. "I almost approved the drug owing to the pressure from various sources, but finally I rejected it. We recommended that it be tried at lower dose."

He said such was the lack of accountability in India that several women who would have suf-

fered from the side-effects of the drug would not even have suspected that the drug was the cause of their problems, and "no one including me, would have been held accountable under the present system existing in the country".

Dr. J.S. Bajaj, member of the Planning Commission and president of the National Academy of Medical Sciences, in a special lecture at the Congress said whenever research involves human subjects, overall supervision must be exercised by a qualified medical person.

"A scientist responsible for the research and development of a compound in the laboratory should not become a part of the clinical investigation team that is responsible for the studies to establish the safety and efficacy of the compound. Unfortunately, these guidelines are not followed."

Dr. Bajaj said the question of biomedical research needed a "careful and critical examination".

Mr. K. Kasturirangan, the director of the Satellite Centre of the ISRO, said that India needed a partnership of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the industry in advancement of space research technologies.

In his platinum jubilee lecture on the "Development of space technology in India: Some interesting challenges", Mr. Kasturirangan said the country always sought to upgrade the capability of the Indian industry to accept the challenges of the Indian space research programmes but due to some bottlenecks, the joint effort could not come along with the expectations. The interaction between the two could result in quality and reliability in various important sec-

tors of the space research, he added.

Elaborating the development in space technology in India, the satellite director lauded the quality of the pictures obtained by a specific camera, equipped with the recently launched satellite, as the best camera so far used in the world.

"The new camera with four spectral bands have a high resolution upto 30 meter, multispectral wavelength approach and ability to revisit the same place at faster rate or more periodically," he said.

Mr. Kasturirangan said ISRO had a plan for 'mobile communication for non-resident Indians living in the Middle East. The next test of the PSLV now designed "GSLV", a multiple stage vehicle, would take place after June, he said.

Highlighting ISRO's work, he said it had built a model for simulating space conditions with high vacuum, artificial sun and angular motion simulator. He suggested measures to upgrade technology for the Indian Remote Sensing Satellite (IRS) system by sensor technology advancement, better communication with ground users for feed back and an orbital orientation guidance system.

He felt the task of maintaining and controlling a satellite in space had become easier and economical as a result of which about 70 per cent of entire communication in the country was covered by these IRS and INSAT.

Comparing the newer GSLV with PSLV, he said the flight regimes of GSLV had got a high payload of 250 kg, weight of 402 tonne and height of 51 metres.



Dr G.R. Balasubramaniam, technical advisor to the Atomic Energy Commission and chief speaker at the 'Brain drain and science education' session in the Young Scientists Forum said that fifty percent of the creamy layer of India's scientific talent goes out of the country, due to paucity of resources and facilities. This phenomenon had resulted in a loss of at least \$ 10 billion (in the years 1966-86), if figures from talent defection from India to US alone was taken into account, he said. He based this disclosure on a sample survey he had conducted on 1,500 students of IIT, Bombay.

Dr. Balasubramaniam said "even though a substantial number of those who leave the country in quest for better prospects and facilities wish to return, they are unable to do so because of wrong policies. What is curious is that the Human Resource Development Ministry considers brain drain to be an investment for the future".

He was of the opinion that if a cumulative figure of those leaving the country in engineering, medicine, management, education and other disciplines was to be computed, it would come to around 20 per cent.

Stating that the problem arising out of brain drain was not only that the best talent left the country but also that those with limited knowledge and half-baked talent were left behind to take policy decisions. This resulted in a decline in standards of science and technology.

He also expressed concern over another type of brain drain. This concerned the fancy of trained scientific manpower for administrative services, which

made even engineers and doctors from reputed institutes to change careers. This was the result of lack of proper planning for the scientific pool, which made them feel inferior to administrative services. Falling standards of university education and research was also responsible for this phenomenon.

Dr. Balasubramaniam said the government should take immediate steps to reverse the brain drain and both short-term and long-term policies should be chalked out keeping this target in view.

In the session on 'Resource crunch and science education', Planning Commission member Dr D. Swaminathan said even though funds for research and education sector have been increased, they are still much less than that in developed countries.

Stating that the government was making efforts to increase allocation for this sector, he added that looking into the other priorities of the authorities, the task appears difficult at the moment. A.K. Banerjee, a professor at Patna University, said while it must be conceded that inputs in the form of funding left much to be desired, results could still be improved if the available resources were put to optimal use.

The deliberations of the congress, attended by over 3000 scientists from India and abroad, were conducted in different sections headed by Sectional Presidents. The names of the General President and the Sectional Presidents of the 81st session of the congress are asunder :

**General President :** Prof. P.N. Srivastava, Professor Emeritus, Jawaharlal Nehru University and CSIR Emeritus Scientist,

Nuclear Science Centre, JNU Campus, New Delhi.

**Mathematics :** Prof. V. Kannan, Dean, School of Mathematics and Computer/Information Sciences, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.

**Statistics :** Prof. S.P. Mukherjee, Centenary Professor of Statistics, University of Calcutta, Calcutta.

**Physics :** Dr. S S Kapoor, Director of Physics Group and Electronics & Instrumentation Group, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Bombay.

**Chemistry :** Prof. C.L. Khetrapal, Professor & Head, Sophisticated Instruments Facility, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

**Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology :** Prof Arun Baran Banerjee, P G Department of Biochemistry, University of Calcutta, Calcutta.

**Material Sciences :** Prof P Ramachandra Rao, Department of Materials Science, BHU, Varanasi.

**Earth System Sciences :** Dr. Harsh K. Gupta Director, National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad.

**Botany :** Prof. Dalbir Singh, former Head of Botany Department, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

**Zoology Entomology & Fisheries :** Prof. Vivekananda Banerjee, former Head of Zoology Department, Science College, Patna University.

**Anthropology & Archaeology :** Prof. G. Golla Reddi Head of Human Genetics Department, Andhra University Visakhapatnam.

**Medical & Veterinary Sciences :** Prof. A K Hati, Head of the Department of Medical Entomology & Chairman Divn. of Parasitology, Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine, Calcutta.

**Agricultural Sciences :** Dr. D.L. Deb, Head, Divn. of Environmental Sciences, IARI, New Delhi.

**Physiology :** Dr. Satipati Chatterjee, Department of Physiology, University of Calcutta, Calcutta.

**Psychology & Education Sciences :** Prof. Jai Prakash, former professor & Chairman, Department of Psychology, Hari Singh Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Sagar.

**Engineering Science :** Mrs. Vijaya Agarwal, Department of Agricultural Structures and Environmental Engineering (Electrical Engineering Unit), Jawaharlal Nehru Agricultural University, Jabalpur.

**Computer Science :** Dr. Devadatta Sinha, Head Department of Computer Science, University of Calcutta.

### **Management of Study Centres**

'In spite of resource crunch, higher education should be within the reach of all the sections of the society and it is obligatory on the part of the open universities to equalise the accessibility of higher education facilities to unequal sectors of the population', said Prof. S. Bashiruddin, Vice-Chancellor of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (AOU), Hyderabad. He was delivering the inaugural address at the two-day 'Workshop on Management of Study Centres for Principals and Co-ordinators of Warangal Region' organised recently by the Centre for Staff Training and Development of Dr. B.R. Am-

bedkar Open university at Kakatiya University.

Prof. Bashiruddin said that the pace of development of the open universities in the country was not as expected since the existing resources were being used for the development of conventional universities. The conventional universities should come to the rescue of the study centres of the open universities in providing facilities for holding classes and conducting practicals of the distance mode. The conventional universities and open universities could not develop in isolation and on the contrary they co-exist for mutual benefit in providing higher education facilities to all sections of the society in general and to the downtrodden in particular, he felt.

Referring to the distance education in China, he said that audio-visual aids would have a greater role to play in any mode of education and particularly in the distance mode and a country like India had not been able to rise to that level in providing audio-visual aids to the open universities in the country.

Prof. Bashiruddin called upon the participants to think in terms of how best they could serve the cause of higher education in the country irrespective of their working in conventional or open universities.

Dr. K. Jayashankar, Vice-Chancellor of Kakatiya University, who presided, said that in the absence of any other viable alternative, distance education had come to stay as the least expensive and easily accessible system in the realm of higher education not only in India but also the world over. The manpower inducted into the system should be adequately equipped with the

strategies to be adopted in the distance mode besides having awareness about the philosophy of the system itself, Dr. Jayashankar said and added that this could be done only by arranging refresher and orientation courses for the people engaged in the field.

Referring to certain misconceptions prevailing among the people about the mode of distance education, Dr. Jayashankar felt that the people working in the system itself did not have the conceptual clarity. Very often they tended to measure or judge the efficacy of the system with the rate of dropout or from the percentage of passes. He felt that the phenomenon of dropout was not peculiar to distance education alone as it had been prevalent at all stages of education and more so at the elementary level. He said that even the percentage of passes could not be the real parameter to judge the efficacy of the system; what was ultimately important was the quality of its final product that the system gave to the society, be it from the conventional mode or through the mode of distance education.

Passing value judgements about the quality of output of the system of distance education without making any empirical studies was not justified, Dr. Jayashankar said and maintained that the quality of the output depended essentially on the motivation of the learner and not necessarily on the mode of transmission of the knowledge.

Detailing the aims and objectives of the Orientation Programme, Prof. V. Shivalinga Prasad, Director of the Centre for Staff Training and Development, said, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University had 92 study centres

with an enrolment of about 60,000 students and workshops of this type would help in effective management of the academic, administrative and financial aspects of the study centres.

The two-day workshop had five business sessions devoted to the discussion of Management of Study Centres in relation to feedback, infrastructure, use of audio-visual programmes and maintenance of records.

In all, 21 Principals and 23 Coordinators besides Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University participated in the workshop.

### **Sharing Faculty Resources Through Video**

The Centre for Educational Technology, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi is engaged in design and development of educational video programmes for higher engineering education. With the support of MHRD, IIT Delhi has set up modern infrastructure for production of broadcast quality programmes. Two types of programmes are available — single concept programmes of 20-25 mins duration, and complete video courses comprising approx. 38 units of 40 mins. each.

The lectures (each of approx. 50 min.) are recorded on line in the studio-classroom and include questions asked by the students. The lectures are not edited and enable the viewer to share the live and spontaneous atmosphere of the class.

These courses are being distributed through Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer, IIT Delhi on cost recov-

ery basis to educational institutions and industry.

The lectures are delivered in English and are available in colour, 1/2" VHKS, PAL 'B' format.

For further information contact may be established with the Coordinator, Educational Technology Facility, Centre for Educational Technology, Indian Institute of Technology Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110 016.

### **Journalism through the Distance Mode**

The Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU) recently launched a certificate course in Journalism. The course is a part of the degree programme to be launched in three phases. The present programme is the first phase. The second and third phases will comprise diploma and degree programmes which are being developed and will be launched in due course.

The certificate programme is of six months duration and has been launched on a pilot project basis in 13 districts of the state through its network of study centres. The admission criteria will be a pass at the 12th standard/old SSC (11th)/the preparatory degree programme of the YCMOU and considerable experience in the field of journalism. 50% seats are reserved for journalists.

The special features of the programme are that (i) the students will not have to go to a college/university regularly; (ii) the students will be provided with specially written books. Audio cassettes will be made available at the study centres; (iii) contact sessions with senior jour-

nalists and experts will be organised at the study centres for the guidance of the students; and (iv) the students will be provided with a work book to enable them to undertake practical assignments in journalism.

### **Management for Varsity Administrators**

The Department of Foundations of Education, Jamia Millia Islamia, recently organised the eighth Management Development Programme for University Administrators. The objectives of the programme were to help administrators understand their role as senior administrators and sensitize them on issues involved in the management of higher education system, to acquaint them with latest developments, and modern techniques of university management, to develop and enhance leadership and managerial skills, and to facilitate acquisition of specialised knowledge in selected areas of institutional planning and management.

The broad areas covered in the programme included Higher Education System, Finance and Financial Management, University and its Social Role, Management of Universities, Role of Computers, Programme evaluation technique; Administrative Support for Library Management, Management of Examinations, and Administration of Distance Education.

Sessions on professional management covered the following topics: Management by objectives, Team Management, Leadership Style, Conflict Management, Organisational Development, Transactional Analysis, Management Information System, Inventory Control manage-

ment, Motivations, Communications, Decision Making, Interpersonal Relation, and Organisational Diagnosis Effectiveness.

Over 10 participants from as many universities and institutions of higher learning participated in the programme. During the course of programme the participants visited other institutions and universities in the capital to get themselves acquainted with their management. Resource Persons were drawn from different departments of Jamia and other institutions of Delhi such as IIPA, NIEPA, ISTM, etc.

The programme was inaugurated by Prof. Ali Ashraf, Ex-Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Millia Islamia while Mr. P. Bhatia, Financial Advisor, University Grants Commission delivered the valedictory address.

### Open Varsity Degrees for Prisoners

Prof. S. Bashiruddin, Vice-Chancellor, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University, gave away BA degrees to five prisoners of the Chanchalguda Central Jail, Hyderabad at a function held in the jail premises on January 16, 1994. So far 14 prisoners of the Chanchalguda Central Jail have graduated from the Open University, of whom one has been rehabilitated as an employee of the open university.

Speaking on the occasion Prof. Bashiruddin said that Master's Programme in Political Science and Public Administration would soon be introduced at the Chanchalguda Study Centre of the Open University. He urged the prisoners, over 50 in number, who were enrolled for the Open University courses, to utilise their spare hours not only to earn degrees but to develop new capa-

bilities through the study of vocational courses, and participation in adult literacy programmes. He said that the Open University would shortly introduce Certificate Course in Food & Nutrition in Urdu Medium based on the Indira Gandhi National Open University's syllabus. Any literate prisoner without any formal qualification could enrol himself for the Certificate course which was hitherto offered only in Telugu and English, the Vice-Chancellor said.

### Teleconference System at YCMOU

The Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University has recently installed a teleconference system in its office at Nashik. The system was inaugurated by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Ram Takwale who had a talk with Dr. C.L. Anand, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, IGNOU, over the teleconference system.

The project is being launched

in 16 Regional Centres of IGNOU and the 5 open Universities in the country with the help of IGNOU and Commonwealth of Learning (COL). At YCMOU it consists of a 'conference unit' and at IGNOU it has a 'conference unit' and 'conference bridge'.

An equipment consisting of a set of six microphones and speakers is connected to a telephone having STD facility. With the help of this equipment twelve persons can converse at a time thereby making it convenient to hold teleconference with students in different cities for training them and offering guidance. Vice Chancellors of several universities will also be able to conduct conference without leaving their offices. In case of need graphs and charts will also be transferred through this equipment with the help of a computer.

Prof A.L. Trask and senior programme officer Mr. A.W. Khan of COL have trained the YCMOU staff in using the equipment efficiently.

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## News from UGC

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### Countrywide Classroom Programme

Between 8th February to 15th February, 1994 the following schedule of telecast on higher education through INSAT-1D under the auspices of the University Grants Commission will be observed. The programme is presented in two sets of one hour duration each every day from 6.00 a.m. to 7.00 a.m. and 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m. The programme is available on the TV Network throughout the country.

#### Ist Transmission

6.00 a.m. to 7.00 a.m.

8.2.94

"Near-Net Shape Processes"

"Perspectives in Distance Education"

"Saving before the Birth"

9.2.94

No Telecast

10.2.94

"Social Reform Movement in Gujarat : Narmad and his Time-I"

"The Leather Story-II

Modern Time"

11.2.94

No Telecast



12.2.94

"Inflation in the Universe"

"Human Resource Development-III Staff Selection" 8.2.94

"Blooming Thorns"

13.2.94

"New Horizons"

"Jacques Monsteer's Artificial Hand"

"The Week Ahead"

14.2.94

No Telecast

15.2.94

"Medicines, Drugs and Body-I History and Evolution of Drugs"

"Low Level Laser Therapy"

"Treating Patients as Consumers : Consumer Protection Act"

Ind Transmission

1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m.

"Water Chemistry in Thermal Power Station-I"

"Law Education — Moot Courts"

"Inside the Lung Bronchoscopy"

9.2.94

"Expensive Soil-II : Cracking of Building and Preventive Measures"

"Understanding Architecture-I : Acts of Experience"

"High Voltage Electron Microscopy"

10.2.94

"Optical Fibre Cables"

"What Shaped Our Earth?"

"Trends in Teaching English"

11.2.94

"Diagram as a tool of Discovery in Mathematics"

"Analysing Aggression"

"Jack and Jill Went Down the Hill"

12.2.94

"New Horizons"

"Jacques Monsteer's Artificial Hand"

"The Week Ahead"

13.2.94

No Telecast

14.2.94

"Father of Laser : Academician A.M. Prokhorov"

"Human Resource Development-VII : Transfer"

"Seed Processing"

15.2.94

"Water Chemistry in Thermal Power Station-II"

"Mystery of Colours"

"Endocrinology-I"

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4. Training in Public Administration: The Changing Perspective - (Ed.) T.N. Chaturvedi (1989)	100.00	30.00	14. Development Programmes for Urban Poor- (Eds.) G.K. Misra and M.K. Narain (1989)	120.00	38.00
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7. Elites: Paradigm and Change in Transnational Perspective - (Eds.) R.N. Thakur and M.K. Gaur (1988)	150.00	45.00	17. Management of National Parks and Sanctuaries in India: A Status Report - Ashish Kothari, Pratibha Panda, Shekhar Singh, Dilnavz Variava (1989)		
8. Lokayukta (Ombudsman in India): A Socio-Legal Study - K.S. Shukla and S.S. Singh (1988)	100.00	30.00	Paper back	150.00	30.00
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# THESES OF THE MONTH

## A list of doctoral theses accepted by Indian Universities

### BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

#### Anthropology

1. Gowloog, Roshina. Lingthen after fifty years : A diachronic study of a Lepcha village in Dzongu, North Bengal. NBU.

2. Md Sabir Hussain. A cross-sectional study of growth in a few somatometric measurements of school going boys of Ranchi. Ranchi. Dr Kanchan Roy, Reader, Department of Anthropology, Ranchi University, Ranchi.

3. Neerja. A study of physical growth of Punjabi girls from 8 through 20 years with special reference to nutritional status. Punjabi. Dr D K Kansal, Department of Sports Science, Punjabi University, Patiala.

4. Prasad, Abha. A bio-anthropological study of leprosy. Ranchi. Dr Kanchan Roy, Reader, Department of Anthropology, Ranchi University, Ranchi.

#### Forensic Science

1. Mukesh Kumar. Personal identification from hair : A study of some morphological and serological characteristics. Punjabi. Prof P K Chattopadhyay, Department of Forensic Sciences, Punjabi University, Patiala.

#### Biochemistry

1. Chattopadhyay, Sarmila. Biochemical studies on ram epididymal spermatozoa and fluids in relation to maturation. Calcutta.

2. Jayavardhanan, K K. Biochemical studies on plant lectins—*Canavalia virosa* and *Moringa oleifera*. Calicut. Dr K R Panicker, Aswati, Pattom Palace, Trivandrum.

3. Latkar, Madhuwanti. Studies on anaerobic biodegradation of recalcitrant xenobiotics. Nagpur. Dr T Chakrabarti, Scientist and Head, Recalcitrant Industrial and Hazardous Wastes Division, National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Nagpur.

4. Mal, Asokkumar. Autooxidation of haemoglobin, superoxide production and superoxide dismutase activities of animal tissues. Calcutta.

5. Parminder Preet Kaur. Biotechnological studies on ethanol production from cellulosic materials. PAU.

6. Rao, Jayanthi. Studies on iron deficiency and mechanisms of carcinogenesis. Osmania.

#### Marine Sciences

1. Manisseri, Mary K. Investigation on heavy metal stress and energetics in *Metapenaeus dobsoni* Miers. CUST. Dr N R Menon, Director, School of Marine Sciences, Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi.

2. Purushan, K S. Studies on improved practices of prawn farming for higher production in Central Kerala. CUST. Dr M Shakhthivel, Director, Marine Products Export Development Authority, Kochi.

3. Ushakumari, B. Studies on the synthesis and nutritional evaluation of prawn feeds. CUST. Dr N Chandramohankumar, Lecturer, Division of Chemical Oceanography, School of Marine Sciences, Cochin University of Science and Technology, Kochi.

#### Microbiology

1. Anilkumar, K K. Some immunological and biochemical studies related to human gastric cancer. Calicut. Dr M V Joseph, Lecturer, Department of Life Sciences, University of Calicut, Calicut.

2. Patel, Hiteshbhai Bachubhai. Microbial degradation of environmental pollutants. Patel. Dr I L Kothari, Reader, Department of Biosciences, Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar.

3. Shrivastava, Pankaj. Bacteriological studies of water of River Narmada with reference to degradation. Durgavati. Dr S K Hasija, Prof and Head, Department of Biological Sciences, Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur and Dr P K Singhal, Reader, Department of Biosciences, Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur.

#### Botany

1. Ajoy Kumar, K N. Cytohistochemical and biochemical studies in the shoot apex of banana plant during the vegetative and reproductive stages. Calicut. Dr K N Madhusoodanan Pillai, Reader, Department of Botany, University of Calicut, Calicut.

2. Chawda, Harikumari T. Epidemiological investigations on purple blotch and anthracnose of onion, *Allium cepa* L. Gulbarga. Dr A H Rajasab, Lecturer, Department of Botany, Gulbarga University, Gulbarga.

3. Dhal, Manjushree. Axis mediated regulation of chloroplast development. Sambalpur. Dr (Mrs) Basanti Biswal, Post Graduate Department of Life Science, Sambalpur University, Burla.

4. Gahalain, Sukhbir Singh. Genetic variability in rices of Kumaun Himalaya. Kumaun. Dr M L H Kaul.

5. Ghosh, Sarmila. Studies on the proteolytic enzymes released by *Bacillus apiarius*. Calcutta.

6. Jagan Mohan Reddy, P. Studies on vesicular arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi associated with *Terminalia alata* Heyne. Osmania.

7. Kachhawaha, Manjusha. Studies on pathological and biochemical changes during pathogenesis of alubukhara and grape fruits and their central measures. HS Gour. Dr Pradeep Mehta,

Reader, Department of Botany, Dr H S Gour Vishwavidyalaya, Sagar.

8. Kalpana, R. Physiological and biochemical changes during accelerated ageing of seeds of pigeonpea, *Cajanus cajan* (L) Millsp. Andhra.

9. Kongsam, Kundala Devi. Aerobiological studies at Imphal. Manipur. Prof N Irabanta Singh, Department of Life Sciences, Manipur University, Imphal.

10. Maitra, Tapankumar. Studies on the relative wood decaying capabilities of monokaryotic and dikaryotic mycelia of common decay inducing organisms of sal, *Shorea robusta*. Calcutta.

11. Mallik, Prabhatkumar. Cloning of a repeated DNA fragment and distribution of different repeat family in some members of Solanaceae. Calcutta.

12. Patro, Madhu Sudan. Ecophysiological effects of certain pesticides on the growth, performance and yield of oyster mushroom, *Pleurotus* sp. Berhampur. Dr B N Misra, Prof, Department of Botany, Berhampur University, Berhampur.

13. Rabadia, V S. Physiological and biochemical changes associated with cotton ovule development. Saurashtra. Dr Y D Singh, Prof, Department of Biosciences, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.

14. Raole, Vinay Madhukarrao. Studies on endangered and endemic desert taxa. Baroda.

15. Rastogi, Dinesh. Chemical screening and genetic evaluation of *Swertia* Linn in Himachal Pradesh. YS Parmar. Dr L J Srivastava, Department of Forest Products, College of Forestry, Nauni.

16. Saxena, Mukesh Kumar. Combining ability analysis for cation and anion exchange capacity in desi cotton, *G. arboreum*. Barkatullah. Prof S A Chagtai, Saifia Science College, Bhopal and Dr D P Nema, R A K College of Agriculture, Sehore.

17. Singh, Subodh. A quantitative study of the epiphytic bryophytes of *Quercus* and *Cedrus* trees in Nainital and vicinity. Kumaun. Dr (Smt) G B Pant.

18. Tarakeswari, Malla. Screening of 6x6 full diallel crosses in the oil-seed crop gingelly, *Sesamum indicum* L for quantitative (seed yield) and qualitative (nutritional value/disease resistance) heterosis through numerical, graphical and combining ability analyses. Andhra.

19. Tewari, Asha. Fungal flora and decay of oak leaves in scenery of developing Pithoragarh. Kumaun.

20. Tiwari, Anamika. Studies on the diseases caused by *Rhizoctonia solani* Kuhn in green gram, *Phaseolus aureus* Roxb. Durgavati. Dr G P Agrawal, Prof and Head (Retd), Department of Bioscience, Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur.

21. Vadhera, Indira. Studies on interaction between *Rotylenchulus reniformis* Linford & Oliveira 1940 and *Fusarium solani* (Mart) Sacc causing root rot disease of *Phaseolus vulgaris*. Durgavati. Dr G S Dave, Prof and Head, Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur.

#### Agriculture

1. Arora, Anju. Further studies on the control of greening disease of *Citrus*. PAU.

2. Hasnabade, Annarao Rajkumar. Effect of integrated nutrient management on soil fertility, soil biology and crop yields in Sorghum - Wheat sequence. Marathwada Agrl. Dr G U Malewar, Head, Department of Agricultural Chemistry and Soil Sciences, Marathwada Agricultural University, Parbhani.

3. Manjunatha, H B. Morphological and cytological investigations on the Uzi fly, *Exorista bombycis*. Bangalore. Dr H P Puttaraju, Department of Sericulture, Bangalore University, Bangalore.

4. Pote, Gorakshanath Vishwanath. Studies on development of strategies for pest management in safflower. Marathwada Agrl. Dr V M Pawar, Senior Insect Toxicologist (Retd), Marathwada Agricultural University, Parbhani.

5. Shukla, Neeraj. The effect of tree canopy on production of vegetables. Ghasidas. Dr D N Tewari, Director General, Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, Dehradun and Dr Ramlal Kashyap, Vice Chancellor, Pt Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur.

#### Zoology

1. Anil, K. Systematic studies on the Eupelmidae (Hymenoptera : Chalcidoidea) of Kerala, India. Calicut. Dr T C Narendran, Prof, Department of Zoology, University of Calicut, Calicut.

2. Anjaneyulu, M. Status of wetland and survey of avi-fauna at Kolleru Lake in Andhra Pradesh. Osmania.

3. Bhagawan, C N. Physiological changes induced by certain phytochemicals in insects. Osmania.

4. Bhatnagar, Upendra. Effect of the extract of *Daucus carota* Linn seeds in combination with ovarian hormones on fertility of female albino rat. Barkatullah. Dr S P Norton, Prof, Department of Zoology, Madhav Vigyan Mahavidyalaya, Bhopal.

5. Bisht, Ganga Singh. Systematics of drosophilids of Kumaun region and cytogenetics of some culturable species. Kumaun. Dr B K Singh.

6. Damodar Reddy, K. Biochemical changes caused by plant products in insects. Osmania.

7. Datta, Dipti. Studies on the histochemistry and seasonal cycle of gonads and gonoducts in some common snakes. Calcutta.

8. Garg, Dinesh Kumar. Studies on the bioecology and management of some of the economically important species of white grub complex in Kumaun Hills. Kumaun. Dr S D Bhatt.

9. Ghousia Begum. *In vivo* toxicity and accumulation of dimethoate in fresh water fish, *Clarias batrachus* Linn. Osmania.

10. Gupta, Achla. Changes in the rat central nervous system, correlation to environmental, restraint stress. AMU. Prof Mehdi Hasan.

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14. Misra, Swati. Functional morphology of the urinogenital organs and gonadal cycle in some common snakes of Eastern India. Calcutta.

15. Neeraja, B. Biochemical studies of certain tissues of the cestode infected fowl *Gallus gallus*, (table bird or white leg-horn) and application of certain plant extracts to control cestode parasitic infection. Osmania.

16. Rajkumari Binosana Devi. Thyroid and photoperiod in the seasonal events of tree sparrow, *Passer montanus malacensis*. Manipur. Late Dr V K Pathak.

17. Ravikumar, R. Qualitative and quantitative studies on foraging cycle of *Apis cerana indica* F. Bangalore. Dr Chandrasekhara Reddy, Department of Zoology, Bangalore University, Bangalore.

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20. Singh, Yanglem Nabachandra. Electrophoretic characterization of proteins and glyco-proteins in selected reproductive organs of male rat after administration of medicinal plants extracts. Kumaun. Dr Manjula Bisht.

21. Sood, Bina. Therapeutic treatment of cadmium intoxication in brain, liver and kidney of mice by glutathione and sodium selenite. Saurashtra. Dr V C Soni, Reader, Department of Bio-Sciences, Saurashtra University, Rajkot.

22. Udayakumar, A M. Studies on the cytogenetic abnormalities of breast cancer patients receiving chemotherapy. Banga-

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1. Bhattacharyya, Subrata. Physiological adaptation to shift work. Calcutta.

2. Gangopadhyay, Anil Kumar. A study of vagal and adrenal influences and their mechanism of action on gastric glands, based on experimental production of gastric ulcers, gastric mucosal mast cell population and gastric tissue histamine concentrations. Calcutta.

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5. Master, Dilipkumar Champaklal. Chromosomal studies in various genetic disorders in human beings. Baroda.

6. Sharma, Poonam. Studies on compounds of potential pharmaceutical interest. Jamia Hamdard. Prof M S Y Khan, Head, Department of Pharmaceutical Chemistry, Jamia Hamdard, Hamdard Nagar, New Delhi.

7. Zachariah, Mohan K. Neurophysiological studies on the onset of puberty. Calicut. Dr T Ramakrishna, Prof and Head, Department of Life Sciences, University of Calicut, Calicut.

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2. Rao, M L V. Immuno-pathogenesis of soluble antigens produced during *Trypanosoma evansi* infection in guinea pigs. J N Krishi.

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Applications are invited (on prescribed form) for the following teaching posts so as to reach the Assistant Registrar, Recruitment Branch, H.P. University, Shimla-171005, alongwith a crossed Indian Postal Order of Rs. 20/- (Rs. 5/- for SC/ST) payable to the Finance Officer, HPU by March 8, 1994 :

**I. PROFESSORS** (Pay Scale : Rs. 4500-7300) in the following subjects of Teaching Deptts.

Business Management - 2 (1 Plan), Sociology - 1 (Plan), Political Science - 2, Hindi - 3 (Specialisation in Translation-1, General - 2 out of which one is leave vacancy for about 2 years), Law - 1, Economics - 1 (leave vacancy for about 1 year).

**II. READERS** (Pay Scale : Rs. 3700-5700) in the following subjects of Teaching Deptts.

Computer Science - 3 (Plan posts), Journalism & Mass Communication - 2 (Plan posts, one regular and one leave vacancy for about 2 years), Tourism Administration - 1 (Plan), Yoga - 1 (Plan), Mathematics - 1 (Plan), Physics - 2 (One in Experimental Electronics, Solid State Physics or Material Science), Statistics - 1, Business Management - 1, Hindi - 1 (Specialisation in Translation).

ii) For Directorate of Correspondence Courses :

History-1, Sanskrit-1.

**III. LECTURERS** (Pay Scale : Rs. 2200-4000) in the following subjects of Teaching Deptts.

a) French-1, Tourism Administration-1, Botany-1, Polymer Chemistry-1, History-1, Law-1, Psychology-1, Zoology-1, Education-1, Political Science-1, Yoga-1 (leave vacancy for about 1 year), Academic Staff College-1.

b) Following posts of Lecturers are reserved for Scheduled Castes Candidates:

English - 1 (leave vacancy for about 1 1/2 years), Tourism Administration-1, Inorganic Chemistry-1, Law-1, Education-1, Computer Science-1, Mathematics -1, Physics-1, Political Science-1.

ii) For Directorate of Correspondence Courses :

Sociology-1, Commerce-2 (One post is reserved for S.C.)

iii) For H.P. University Evening College, Shimla : Public Administration-1.

**IV. PRINCIPAL, H.P. UNIVERSITY EVENING COLLEGE, SHIMLA-1.**

(Pay Scale : Rs. 3700-5700).

The qualifications for the above mentioned posts will be made available with the application form.

Candidates already in service should send their applications through proper channel. An advance copy, however, may be sent direct.

Candidates called for interview will have to come to the place of the interview at their own expenses and bring with them their original research papers, degrees and certificates etc. for verification.

The University reserves the right to fill up or not to fill up the post/s or to call only suitable candidates for interview. The number of posts likely to be filled may vary.

Application form alongwith detailed qualifications and other conditions can be obtained from the Assistant Registrar, Recruitment Branch, H.P. University, Shimla-171005, personally on payment of Rs. 5/- or by making a written request to him accompanied by self-addressed envelope of 23 x 10 cms. with postage stamps affixed worth Rs. 2/- and a postal order of Rs. 5/- drawn in favour of Finance Officer, HPU, Shimla.

Note : (i) Applications received on plain paper, applications not in conformity with the requirements as specified in the application form and applications received after the last date will not be entertained and no correspondence will be entertained in this regard.

(ii) A person applying for more than one post should send a separate application for each post.

(iii) Persons who have applied earlier in response to Advt. No. 6/91, dated 3.12.91 for Lecturer in Sociology for D.C.C., Advt. No. 2/92, dated 17.7.92 for Professors in Sociology, Hindi (General), Law, Readers in Yoga, Business Admn/Management for teaching Deptts, History and Sanskrit for D.C.C., Lecturers in Botany, Chemistry History, Law, Psychology, Zoology for teaching Deptts. Lecturer in Public Administration for H.P.U. Evening College, Shimla, Advt. No. 3/92, dated 21.10.92 for Professors in Business Management, Political Science, Readers in Mathematics, Physics, Statistics, Lecturers

in Political Science, Yoga (L.V.) for teaching Deptts Lecturer in Commerce for DCC and Lecturer in Academic Staff College, need not to apply again. However, they may send additional informations, if any.

**A.R. Chauhan  
REGISTRAR**

## BHAVNAGAR UNIVERSITY

NOTIFICATION NO. 2/94

Applications are invited for the following posts in the prescribed forms which can be obtained from the University Office by sending (Non-refundable) fees of Rs. 25/- (Rupees twenty five only) for the general category and Rs. 12.50 (Rupees twelve and paise fifty only) for the SC/ST candidates, by Crossed Demand Draft in favour of "Registrar, Bhavnagar University, Bhavnagar or by depositing cash during office hours i.e. from 11-00 a.m. to 2-00 p.m. on working days. Applications with full details and enclosures should reach the undersigned on or before 28-2-1994.

For M.B.A. (Master of Business Administration) :

1. Professor	1
2. Reader	2
3. Lecturer	3

For M.C.A. (Master of Computer Applications) :

1. Professor	1
2. Reader	1
3. Lecturer	1
4. Programmer	1

1. Qualifications : As per U.G.C./ University Norms. Details will be provided with the application form.

2. Preference will be given to (SC/ST candidates) for these posts if other academic aspects are equal.

3. Pay Scales :

Professors	: 4500-7300
Reader	: 3700-5700
Lecturer	: 2200-4000
Programmer	: 2200-4000

4. Candidates already in service must apply through their present employers.

**D.A. Vaishnav  
REGISTRAR**



# GULBARGA UNIVERSITY, GULBARGA

NO. GUG/ADM-I/93-94/11829

Date : 19-1-1994.

## NOTIFICATION

Applications in the prescribed form in (Eight Sets) are invited from qualified candidates of Indian nationality for the following teaching posts in various P.G. Departments of this University. The applications together with necessary documents should reach the Registrar, Gulbarga University, Gulbarga-585106 by Registered Post on or before 7th MARCH 1994. Incomplete applications and applications received after the due date will not be entertained. The details of posts are as under :

Sl. No.	Name of the post & Scale of pay	Department	Backlog Vacancies		Current Vacancies.
			SC	ST	
1. PROFESSOR : 4500-150-5700-200-7300.		Kannada	--	01	
		English	01	--	
		Mathematics	01	01	01 GM
		(1 Comp. Science, 1 MCA)	--	--	01 Gr.A
		Geology	--	--	01 SC
					01 ST
		Pol. Science	--	--	01 Single Post (UR)
		M.S.W.	--	--	01 Single Post "
		History	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Law	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Zoology	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Education	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Urdu	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Sociology	--	--	01 Single Post "
		M.B.A.	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Bio-Technology	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Statistics	--	--	01 Single Post "
2. READER : 3700-125-4700-150-5700.		Kannada	--	01	
		English	01	--	
		Chemistry	02	01	01 -Group A
		(Specialisation - Organic, Analytical, Bio-Chemistry & Physical)			
		Microbiology	01	--	01 ST
		Botany	01	--	01 ST
		Pol.Science	--	--	01 ST
		Commerce	--	--	01 ST
		Appl. Electronics	--	--	01 ST
		Urdu	--	--	01 Single Post (UR)
		Marathi	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Sociology	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Sanskrit	--	--	01 Single Post "
		M.S.W.	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Lib.& Infr. Sci.	--	--	01 Single Post "
		Mathematics (1 Comp. Science) & 1 MCA)	--	01	01 Group A
					01 Group B
3. LECTURER : Rs 2200-4000		English	--	01	01 Group A
					01 Group B
		Commerce	--	01	01 Group A
		Microbiology	--	01	
		Geology			
		(1 Mech. Engg)	01	01	01 Group A
		(1 Elect. Engg)	--	--	01 Group B
		(1 Applied Geophysics)			
		(1 Mathematics)			
		Pol. Science	--	01	
		Hindi	--	--	01 Group A
		Marathi	--	01	
		Bio-Chemistry	01	01	01 Group A
		Physics	--	01	01 -SC
					01 Group A
		Appl. Electronics	--	--	01 Group A
					01 -SC
					01 Group B
		Statistics	01	--	--
		Mathematics (MCA)	--	01	01 Group A
					01 Group B
		Sociology	--	--	01 -SC

## QUALIFICATIONS

The Minimum Qualifications prescribed for the above posts are as per UGC norms viz.

### 1. PROFESSOR :

An eminent Scholar with published work of high quality actively engaged in research with 10 years of experience in postgraduate teaching and/or research at the University/National level Institutions, including experience or guiding research at doctoral level.

OR

An outstanding scholar with established reputation who has made significant contribution to knowledge.

### 2. READER :

Good academic record with a Doctoral Degree or equivalent published work. Candidates from outside the University system in addition shall also possess atleast 55% marks or an equivalent grade at the Master's degree level.

Eight years experience of teaching and/or, research including upto 3 years for research degrees and has made some mark in the areas of scholarship as evidenced by quality of publications, contribution to educational renovation, design of new courses and curricula.

### 3. LECTURER :

A Good Academic Record with atleast 55% marks or an equivalent grade at Master's Degree level in the relevant subject from an Indian University or an equivalent Degree from a foreign University. The candidates should have passed the Eligibility Test conducted by the U.G.C. or CSIR or Similar Test of State Level NET. Candidates who have applied for NET Examination may also apply but they should produce the proof of having passed the Test before the date of interview. However candidates who have submitted Ph.D thesis upto 31.12.1993 and candidates who have done M.Phil upto 31.12.1992 are exempted from passing the NET

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS :

**NOTE :** The University reserves the right to fill or not to fill any or all of the advertised posts.

1. The prescribed application forms can be had from the Registrar, Gulbarga University, Gulbarga-585106 on production of Bank Challan for having paid Rs. 50.00 in the State Bank of Hyderabad, University Campus Branch, Gulbarga. (Rs 25.00 for SC/ST Students).

2. Outstation candidates desirous of obtaining application forms by post

should send Crossed Bank Demand Draft of requisite fee drawn in favour of the Finance Officer, Gulbarga University, Gulbarga with a requisition and self addressed cover measuring 6" x 12" duly affixing postal stamp of Rs. 10.00.

3. Copies of publication and true copies of testimonials/certificates/marks cards should be enclosed in eight sets, which will not be returned. Those who are in employment should send their applications through their present employer.

4. Reservations have been made in accordance with the Government Orders issued from time to time and also in accordance with the provisions of the Karnataka State Universities Act, 1976. Appli-

cants claiming the benefit of reservation shall enclose the certificate issued by the competent authority not older than one year.

5. Persons below 18 years of age and above 60 years need not apply.

6. No TA/DA will be paid to the applicants either for attending interview or for joining the service, if selected.

7. Candidates selected should be prepared to work anywhere in Gulbarga University jurisdiction.

8. Canvassing directly or indirectly will disqualify the candidature.

REGISTRAR

## UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

No : GA II/C1/2871/92

Dated: 15th January, 1994

### NOTIFICATION

Applications in the prescribed form are invited from eligible candidates for appointment to the teaching positions in the Institute of Foreign Languages, Palayad Campus, Thalassery, University of Calicut.

Sl. No.	Category	No. of posts	Nature of vacancy	Reservation/ Open competition	Area of specialisation
1.	Professor in English	2	1. Permanent 2. Permanent	1. Open 2. SC/ST	Nil Criticism*
2.	Reader in English	1	Permanent	SC/ST	
3.	Lecturer in English	2	1. Permanent 2. Permanent	1. Muslim 2. Open	

\* Candidates belonging to the S.C./S.T. Communities who do not have the required area of specialisation may also apply for the post of Professor reserved for SC/ST; in case such candidates are selected they should undergo training/course of study in the area of specialisation specified for the period as may be prescribed by the University.

#### 2. Scale of pay

Professor : Rs. 4500 - 7300  
Reader : Rs. 3700 - 5700  
Lecturer : Rs. 2200 - 4000

3. Qualifications : As per the Calicut University Regulations as amended on 14-05-1992.

4. How to apply : Candidates are required to apply in the prescribed application form, which can be obtained from the undersigned on requisition by remitting Rs. 100/- towards the cost of application

form, along with a self addressed stamped (stamps worth Rs. 10/-) envelope of size 25 x 12 c.m.

Candidates from abroad may apply on plain paper indicating the post applied for, along with the copies of certificates/documents in proof of their qualifications, age, experience, etc. by remitting an application free of Rs. 250/- by Demand Draft in favour of the Finance Officer, University of Calicut, Tenhipalam and they will be allowed to submit their applications 15 days past the last date of receipt of application.

5. Relaxation in remittance of the cost of application form :

(i) Candidates belonging to SC/ST communities, physically handicapped; and Ex-servicemen eligible for pension are exempted from remitting the cost of application form; provided, they produce necessary certificate to prove their eligibility along with requisition for application forms.

(ii) Employed candidates belonging to SC/ST communities should remit Rs. 15/- towards cost of application form, provided they produce community certificate from the competent authority.

#### 6. Mode of remittances :

i) Candidates from outside Kerala State : By Indian Postal Order in favour of the Finance Officer, University of Calicut, payable at Tenhipalam.

ii) Candidates from within the state should credit their remittance to the Head of Account :

a) 8443-00-106-CUF : For Treasuries in Malappuram District.

b) 8658-102-96-I B.CUS : For Treasuries in other Districts.

c) No. II Current Account of the Finance Officer, at the S.B.T., Tenhipalam Branch : For making remittances at Calicut University Campus

7. Age limit, qualifications, etc. for each post are as prescribed in the detailed notification, which will be issued along with the application form.

8. The last date for receipt of the application completed in all respects, by the undersigned in the University Office is 28-02-1994.

Prof. T.K. Ummer  
REGISTRAR

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**ADVERTISEMENT**

Applications in the prescribed form (in 8 copies) are invited for the following posts of University Teaching Departments so as to reach the undersigned on or before 24 Feb. 1994.

**1. Professor - One each for-**

(i) Bio-Science "M.Sc., Ph.D. Botany with specialization in Biotechnology/Immunology/Molecular Biology)."

(ii) Economics - General.

**2. Reader - One each for-**

(i) Statistics Department of System Science and Statistics with Specialization in "Sampling Techniques/Inference."

(ii) Physical Education - (i) M.P.Ed. with at least 55% marks, (ii) M.Phil or Ph.D. in Physical Education, (iii) At least five years of teaching experience of Post-graduate classes, (iv) Administrative experience with knowledge of organising sports activities.

**3. Lecturer - One each for -**

(i) Tribal Studies "M.A. in Geography/Anthropology with Ph. D. in any aspect of Tribal Studies and field experience of tribal habitats.."

(ii) Hindi - Advanced research on "Katha Sahitya" (Fiction).

Reservation for SC/ST candidates as per rules of U.G.C. The minimum essential qualifications and pay scales for these posts are exactly the same as are prescribed by the University Grants Commission. The prescribed application forms (in 8 copies) together with details of qualifications, specialization etc. can be obtained from the undersigned on payment of Rs. 25/- in person or by sending a Account payee Bank Draft of Rs. 25/- payable to the Registrar, Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur. Those who wish to get the application forms by Registered Post should also send an additional amount of Rs. 10/- through Bank Draft. The University reserves the right to fill in or not to fill in any post and also to call any candidate for interview. Number of posts may be reduced or increased.

**N.P. Shrivastava  
REGISTRAR**

**OSMANIA UNIVERSITY**

**HYDERABAD-500 007. (A.P.)**

**ADVERTISEMENT No. 1/94**

**Dated: 28th Jan. 1994.**

Applications in the prescribed form together with the registration fee of Rs. 10/- payable through I.P.O./Demand Draft only (M.O. is not acceptable) drawn in favour of the Registrar, OU are invited for the following posts in the University service so as to reach the undersigned in person or by post on or before 28th February, 1994.

Department	Prof.	Reader	Lect.
<b>GROUP-I</b>			
1. Kannada	1	-	-
2. Philosophy	1	-	-
3. Telugu	-	-	1
4. Commerce - PGC Mahabubnagar	1	-	-
PGC Naigonda	1	1	-
5. Public Administration	1	-	-
6. Political Science	-	-	-
PGC Mahabubnagar	1	1	-
<b>GROUP - II</b>			
7. Genetics	1	1	1
8. Microbiology	1	-	-
9. Zoology	1	-	-
<b>GROUP - III</b>			
10. Electronic & Communication Engineering	1	-	-

**Pay Scales :** Professor Rs. 4500-7300  
Reader Rs. 3700-5700  
Lecturer Rs. 2200-4000

**Age :** Professor - Not more than 50 years  
Reader - Not more than 40 years  
Lecturer - Not more than 35 years

**Reservations :** 15%, 7 1/2% and 25% reservations are made for the candidates belonging to SC, ST & BC respectively as per roster system for the posts of Readers and Lecturers only.

Group	Category	Total	OC	SC	ST	B C			
						A	B	C	D
GROUP-I	Reader	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
	Lecturer	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
GROUP-II	Reader	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
	Lecturer	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

**Note :** 1) The details of general conditions are supplied to the candidates along-with the application form and all the candidates are requested to note that they are strictly bound by the said conditions; and

2) The University reserves the right to itself to increase or decrease the number of posts and filling up of any of the vacancies depends on exigencies of teaching work.

**\*Note :** i) Age limit does not apply to the employees of this University;

ii) Relaxation in age to the extent of five years shall be granted to the candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes; &

iii) Relaxation in age to the extent of five years shall be granted to the teachers who have put in atleast five years of service in any of the Colleges affiliated to the Osmania University.

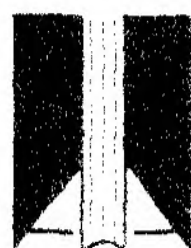
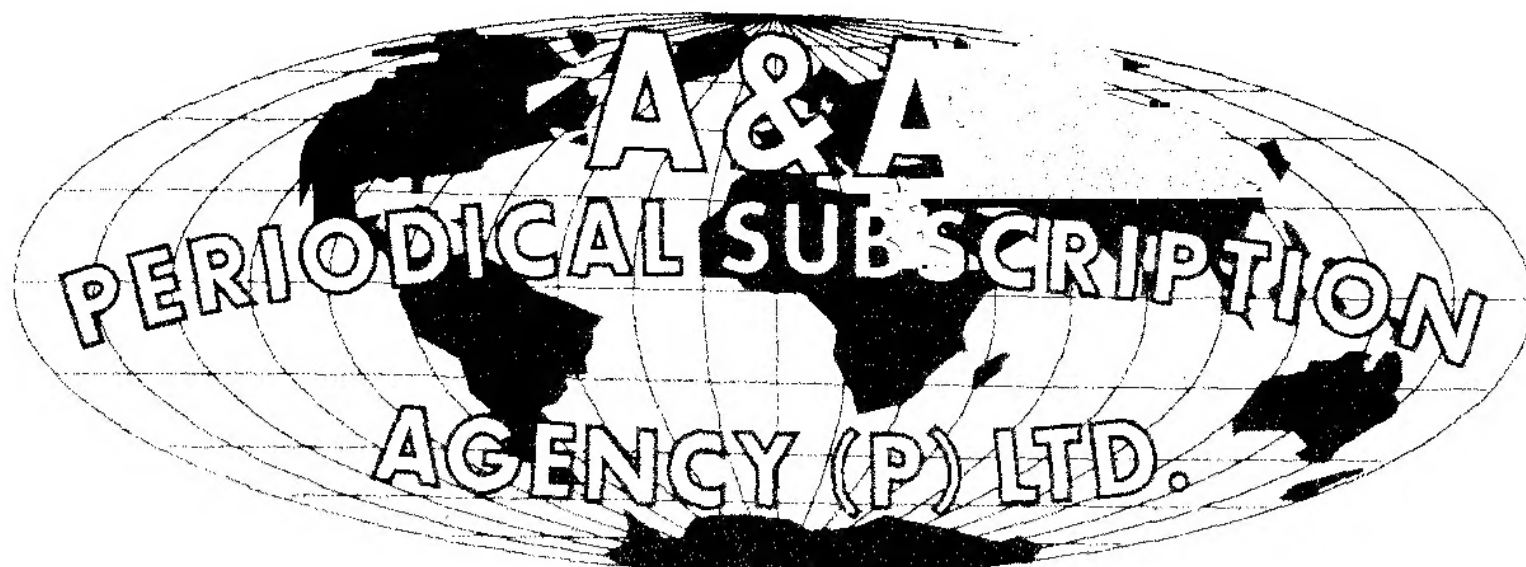
Application forms with full details regarding the qualifications, pay scales and age etc., can be had from the Director, Department of University Press & Publications, Osmania University on payment of Rs. 10/- in person or by sending an I.P.O./Demand Draft together with postal charges made payable to the Director and by sending a self-addressed envelope of 14.5 cms x 26.5 cms.

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